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HE BAD HABITS

OF

GOOD SOCIETY.

BY

GEO. A. BAKER, JR.

Mary M. Barclay
— — — — — *Son*

Annie Barclay

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ON SANTA CLAUS!

BRAVE old times those were. In the first half of the seventeenth century, we mean ; before there was any such place as New York and Manhattan Island was occupied mostly by woods, and had a funny little Dutch town, known as New Amsterdam, sprouting out of the southern end of it. Those were the days of solid comfort, of mighty pipes, and unctuous dough-nuts. Winter had not yet been so much affected by artificiality as he is now-a-days, and was contented to be what he is, not trying to pass himself off for Spring ; and Christmas—well, it was Christmas. Do you know why ? Because in those times Santa Claus used to live in a great old house in the

midst of an evergreen forest, just back of the Hudson, and about half-way between New Amsterdam and Albany. A house built out of funny little Dutch bricks, with gables whose sides looked like stair-cases, and a roof of red tiles with more weathercocks and chimneys sticking out of it than you could count. Phew, how cold it was there! The wind roared and shouted around the house, and the snow fell steadily half the year, so that the summers never melted it away till winter came again. And Santa Claus thought that was the greatest pleasure in life : for he loved to have enormous fires in the great fire-places, and the colder it was, the bigger fires he would have, and the louder the winds roared around his chimney. There he sat and worked away all the year round, making dolls, and soldiers, and Noah's arks, and witches, and every other sort of toy you can think of. When Christmas Eve came he'd harness up his reindeers, Dasher, and Prancer, and Vixen, and the rest

of them, and wrap himself up in furs, and light his big pipe, and cram his sled full of the doll-babies and Noah's arks, and all the other toys he'd been making, and off he'd go with a great shout and tremendous ringing of sleigh-bells. Before morning he'd be up and down every chimney in New Amsterdam, filling the stout grey yarn stockings with toys, and apples, and ginger-bread, laughing and chuckling so all the while, that the laughs and chuckles didn't get out of the air for a week afterwards.


But the old house has gone to ruin, and Santa Claus doesn't live there any longer. You see he married about forty years ago ; his wife was a Grundy, daughter of old Mrs. Grundy, of Fifth Avenue, of whom you've all heard. She married him for his money, and couldn't put up with his plain way of living and his careless jollity. He is such an easy-going, good natured old soul, that she manages him without any trouble. So the first thing she did was to make him change his

name to St. Nicholas ; then she made him give up his old house, and move into town ; then she sent away the reindeers, for she didn't know what Ma *would* say to such an outlandish turn-out ; then she threw away his pipe because it was vulgar, and the first Christmas Eve that he went off and stayed out all night she had hysterics, and declared she'd go home to her Ma, and get a divorce if he ever did such a thing again. She'd have put a stop to his giving away toys every year, too, only she thought it looked well, and as it was, she wouldn't let him make them himself any more, but compelled him to spend enormous sums in bringing them from Paris, and Vienna, and Nuremberg.

So now Santa Claus is St. Nicholas, and lives in a brown stone house on Fifth Avenue, a great deal handsomer than he can afford, and keeps a carriage, not because he wants it, but because Mrs. Shoddy, next door, keeps one ; and lives, not to be jolly himself and to

make everybody else so, but to please his wife's mother. He has to give an awful pull, what with his wife's extravagance, and the high prices of Parisian and Viennese toys, to make both ends meet, although he does speculate in stocks, and is very lucky. Instead of looking forward to Christmas with pleasure, and thinking what a good time he will have, he pulls out his ledger, and groans, and wonders how on earth he's going to make his presents this year, and thinks he would stop giving them entirely, only he's so mortally afraid of his mother-in-law, and he knows what she'd say if he did. So he borrows money wherever he can, and sends over to Paris for fans, and opera-glasses, and bon-bon boxes, and jewelry, and when they come he sits down in his parlor and lets his wife tell him just what to do with them. So she takes out her list and runs over the names ; she has all the rich people down, for she is a religious woman, and the Bible says "unto him that

hath, it shall be given." This is the way she talks—"The little Croesuses must have some very elegant things, of course ; their mother's a horrid old cat, but Croesus could help you very much in business. And there are the Centlivres ; we must pick out something magnificent for them ; they give a party Christmas night : of course the presents will be on exhibition, and I shall sink with shame if any one else's are handsomer than ours." So she goes on, until all the rich people are disposed of. Then Santa Claus asks : "How about the Brinkers, my dear ?" The Brinkers are great favorites of his. "Good gracious, dearest ! How often have I told you, you mustn't manifest such an interest in those Brinkers ? What would Ma say if she knew you associated with such common people !" "But, I'm Dutch myself, pet." "Of course you are, darling, but there's no need of letting every one know it !" St. Nicholas hardly dares to do it, but he finally suggests very meekly : "The



poor children, my darling." "Bother the poor children, my dear!" They're a most affectionate couple, you know. Then St. Nicholas sighs and sighs, and sends for his messengers, and they all come in with long faces, and take off big packages to the Croesuses and the Centlivres, and the rest of them. The messengers do their work entirely as a matter of business, so there isn't a sign of a laugh, nor a symptom of a chuckle in the air next day. The little Croesuses first cry, because they haven't received more, and then fight over what they have; then they eat too much French candy, and get sick and cross, and the whole house is filled with their noise. So manma has a head-ache; and papa longs for his office, and misses the tick-tick of the stock telegraph, and thinks what a confounded nuisance holidays are. That is what Christmas is like in good society.

But I must tell you a secret. Away up in the fourth story of his grand house, where his

wife never goes, St. Nicholas has a little workshop, and there he sits whenever he gets a chance, making the most wonderful dolls, and gorgeous soldiers, and miraculous jumping-jacks, and tin horns—such quantities of tin horns! Some one ought to speak to him about those tin horns. But after all they please the poor children, so we suppose it's all right. Now do you know what he does with these things? On Christmas Eve he gets his old sled down from the stable away up by the North Pole, and as soon as his wife is fast asleep, he puts on his old furs and gets out from under his shirts in his bureau-drawer a Dutch pipe, three times as big as the one his wife threw away, and off he goes. He tumbles down all the poor peoples chimneys, and fills up the stockings to overflowing, and plants gorgeous Christmas trees in all the Mission schools.

He has a glorious good time, and laughs and chuckles tremendously, except when, once

in a while, he thinks of what would happen if his wife found him out.

So there's a little fun going on after all.

Do you know, if it were not for this performance of his, we should wish with all our heart that St. Nicholas were dead and buried.

But, we must say, we wish his wife would die, and that all the Grundy family would follow her good example, for between them they've spoiled a good many jolly people besides St. Nicholas.



ON RUSTICATING.

WE made our first promenade on Fifth Avenue, since coming back to town, last Sunday morning. We took with us Dupays, our cousin from the rural districts. He had heard wonderful accounts of the Sabbath glories of the Avenue: the lovely girls, the elegant dresses, the magnificently-bound prayer books, and all that. He was wild to gaze upon these marvels with his own eyes.

We expected to find our friends looking blooming after their summer's recreation. We said so to Dupays. After we had walked for nearly an hour, Dupays remarked: "Call them blooming! why, I've seen pickled cauliflower that looked blooming than them! We did

not approve of his manner of expressing himself, but could not help agreeing with him.

Our friends did not look well. We could not understand it. These people had been spending the Summer in the most healthful way they could think of, and yet, evidently, had not been benefitted at all,

We met Cordifrage and Nelly Sansargent, and he looked as pale as a ghost, and she not much rosier. Now, Cordifrage ought to look well. He told us at the beginning of the summer that his nerves were completely "un-stwung," and that he was going to "twavel" about, and "west" himself; and he did. He got up very early every morning—early enough to make him the healthiest, and wealthiest, and wisest man in town—to catch trains; and slept well, and regularly in boats and sleeping-cars; ate his meals slowly and peacefully at rail-road restaurants; where ample time was allowed for refreshments! sauntered leisurely about strange stations, amusing himself look-

ing for his luggage, and altogether had a real restful time, but spite of it all, he's just as "shaky," he says as he was in the Spring.

We were even more surprised at Nelly. She has passed the most quiet and rustic summer imaginable in Saratoga, at Congress Hall. She drank fourteen or fifteen glasses of assorted spring waters every morning. Then, if the weather were warm, she would doze till dinner, when she would eat some simple little thing like curried chicken, or lobster croquettes, drinking a glass or two of champagne, and a cup of black coffee. She would lie down to rest all the afternoon with some nice, improving book by Yates, or Charles Reade, and a pound or two of French candy. She would come down stairs about nine, in a low necked dress, always being careful to wear a heavy wrap of lace or tulle, or something like that, and walk on the piazza, where there is always a nice, damp, refreshing air in the evening. There she would eat a light sup-

per of ice-cream and cake, and dance for a little while, until about midnight, say, when she would go out on the back piazza, and being sufficiently warm with dancing, would not need her wrap. She retired early, at about two A. M., usually. She did this every day for two months. No one ever lived more regularly.

Then there are Mrs. Centlivres and Molly. Mrs. Centlivres has a very large house in New York, that she manages herself. To get a little relief from housekeeping cares, she had determined to hire a little cottage for the summer, and "let it run itself." She secured a perfect little gem of a place, grey stone, with a tower ; not more than twenty or thirty rooms in it altogether. She kept up a very small establishment ; only a coachman, a groom, a gardener, two waiters, and a few maid-servants. Molly told me it was "awful fun," especially two or three times when the girls all left, and she and her mother had to cook the meals for a house-

ful of guests, and not let them know it. The servants found it somewhat monotonous, and doubtless with the charitable intention of affording their mistress excuses for three trips to town a week, were continually leaving her without any warning whatever. She must have had a delightful time, and we cannot imagine what makes her look so worn out, and worried.

All the little Millefleurs are sick, although their mother took them to a quiet place in New Jersey, where they had fresh air, and eggs and milk at least three times a week, and delicious pork the rest of the time, and where they could run about all day. Mrs. Millefleurs told us that often they would be playing down by the pond until after dark. It was a remarkably healthy place. The farmer said that a case of "shakes" had never been known there. Since the children came home they have all been sick with intermittent fevers; and as her house is on the very top of Murray Hill, Mrs. Millefleurs doesn't understand it. Neither do we.

When we spoke of this to Dupays, he said that New York people were fools. "Why don't you all come up to some jolly place among the mountains, like ours, and do nothing for three months but eat and sleep, and tumble about in old clothes, and be sensible?" Just imagine Nelly Sansargent, and Molly "tumbling around in old clothes," and the rest of it ! Dupays is such an idiot.



ON LATE HOURS.

PASTY complexioned, flabby muscled "—— so does the Autocrat, in one of his breakfast-table monologues, describe the youth of our Atlantic cities. True, oh doctor, yet are the same youths marvels of physical strength, and nervous force—considering the wear and tear they undergo. Few people appreciate the hardships of being much "in society." The life is a crucial experiment upon the endurance of the human constitution. It's regular irregularity is awful to contemplate. The society man does two days' work every evening. Till ten o'clock he rushes around making calls; till eleven he plays billiards. Then he has a German to

lead, and in this engrossing work he is exerting his best diplomatic ability, and keeping down his temper with a strong hand for some two or three hours ; afterwards there is a ball to take in, or failing this, he must stop at his club, or hear a song at Alberti's, or meet some of the boys at Parker's or Harry Clifton's. So, if he reaches his bed before three, he is fortunate ; and more fortunate still, if circumstances, over which he has not the slightest control, do not compel him to sleep in his boots.

A touch of the morning sunshine re-chrysalizes this Fifth Avenue butterfly, and the Wall Street grub must be in his office by nine or half-after, with an all-gone feeling that necessitates the mystic rite, known to the initiated as " bracing-up."

" It's the pace that kills," and many a man drops out after his second winter, to spend years in winning back his wasted vigor. Perhaps a little cough annoys him ; by-and-by he goes South for his health, and then ——

“We commit his body to the ground ; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.”

Ladies do not suffer from the late hour system so much. It is the blessed privilege of the sex to sleep till all sorts of unholy hours of the day, with none to molest or make them afraid. But they lose all their precious beauty sleep, for to retire before midnight is the one exception to prove the rule that in New York nothing is impossible. Our party hours are an outrage. Eleven to three—think of it ! Is there any reason why they should not be from nine to midnight ? Several of our smaller sociables and dancing classes have tried the early-closing plan with admirable success. One set last Winter, among whose members were some of the most thorough-going and indefatigable society-people in the city, so arranged its meetings that dancing commenced between eight and half-after ; the German began at ten, and the entertainment was over by twelve. They were among the most en-

joyable affairs of the Winter, and one could get up at a frightfully early hour next morning without the slightest yearning for the revivifying waters of Congress Spring.


E-i-g-h-t always spells ten in our invitations. Not that most of our "best society" have not learned to read, but no one goes anywhere until the later hour, for fear of committing the unpardonable sin of being first. O Mrs. Grundy, Mrs. Grundy, how sadly many are the follies you must answer for !

Yet there are ladies in society to whom even you bow in homage your be-wigged old head. To those we must appeal, for theirs is the court of last resort. Mrs. Centlivres, Mme. Millefleurs, queens of fashion, have pity. Who shall accomplish this reform ? Her name shall be forever famous in the annals of society, and unto her shall be raised in every boudoir, an altar whereon pastilles shall smoke incessantly, and Boston buds perennially bloom. No use, Madame, to give a party yourself, and

ask your friends to come early. They would scorn the thought. Implore, entreat, kneel reckless on the first breadth of Madame Au Brienne's latest triumph ; try even the dangerous experiment of weeping — naught will all this avail. But when next you accept an invitation, send out to all that lovely clan, whose chieftainness you are, your proclamation that you go early. Charge them on their allegiance to be in the dressing room on your arrival. Fill your hostess' parlors with mirth, and beauty, and exaggerated trains by nine o'clock at latest, and when, at eleven, Mrs. Jhones and Mrs. Smithe, worthy ladies, who have all their lives looked up to you with unquestioning faith and awful admiration, appear, and find "Madame Millefleurs set here already!" — their souls will be filled with consternation. Deepen it, Madame ! Say unto them in the sweet accents of society friendship : " O, my dear, you are so late ; have you been to another reception ? The evening is almost over —— isn't

it delightful that late hours are become so *very* unfashionable." Paris dresses will not comfort their souls that night, neither will they be stayed with flagons nor the luscious quail, and their dreams shall be of horror. The awful shade of Mrs. Grundy shall sit in night-mare judgment on their crime. At their next party, be sure they will be very early, and simpler Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Smith, who look up to them as they to you, will be overwhelmed, late coming with a revised edition of your remarks. And so the reform will be begun.

Madame Millefleurs, queen of the games, be merciful! Behold an army of New York society-men, pale and hollow-eyed, stretch out their shaking hands, and kneeling on the trampled sands of the social arena, pray you for pity in their sore distress. Grant their prayer, and they will bless you. Deny it—they may not question your will, and can but cry with desperate resolution, "Ave Faustina, Imperatrix! Morituri te salutant!"





ON CHAMPAGNE CORKS.

FOLLOWING the example of a famous New York journal, that once found it necessary to announce what it was not, we may preface by declaring that this is not a temperance lecture. The reader will find no reference, respectful or otherwise, to "the bowl," or the "rum demon." To others we leave this fertile field, wherein grow rankly more or less questionable metaphors, entwining thickly as do the imaginary serpents, that haunt the delirious dreams of the "frightful example." We will treat our subject in the philosophico-social manner, purely.

A champagne cork is a good thing in its place; its place is in the neck of a bottle.



Anywhere else it is not useful. He who takes the cork from the bottle renders a useful thing useless, and the economy of the universe suffers. In that paragraph the claims of philosophy and logic are disposed of. We turn to the social point of view.

Wine, in inordinate quantities, has become a necessary concomitant, semi-drunkenness on the part of most of the men present a disagreeable feature, of every large entertainment. This vinous superfluity is another result of that slavish regard for appearances, which is the curse of our city life. The host knows what the result will be ; he knows that he is spoiling the pleasure of every lady in his house that evening ; but he is mortally afraid of the disgraceful stigma of having given a "dry party." He would rather be accused of picking a pocket. These freshets of champagne, that sweep discretion from our brains, are, at parties, unpardonably out of place. Does not the host, in his array of bottles, tacit-

ly confess that his entertainment is but a shabby affair, that cannot pass muster unless his guests are rendered incapable of sober judgment. Are New York parties so dull, and colorless, that they must be prismaticised by deftly-cut wine glasses ? Custom is trying to make them so—it is pushing beauty from her throne, to set up in her place a bottle. It is hardly an open question whether the society-man goes to a party for the sake of social intercourse, or gratis champagne.

The Widow Cliquot is our reigning belle. Madame Millefleurs is queen of hearts, with only a slight up-stairs rivalry from Madame Eau-de-vie, and the sorceress Nicotiana, until supper comes. Then she hears the signal for her dethronement, a “pop” and a “gurgle.” Enter the sparkling widow ; a royal salute of “pops” is fired in her honor, and every dress-coat flocks to do her homage.

They may return to Madame Millefleurs, but the spell of the widow is upon them ; so the

stately lady and the sweet, fresh, innocent girls about her, must submit to maudlin sentimentalism or drunken impertinence from those who, before supper, were models of chivalric devotion and respect. The widow has whispered to them that they are conquering heart-destroyers; that respect for the sanctity of womanhood is profane adjectived nonsense; they believe her, and make fools of themselves accordingly.

My dear fellow! You are talking, after your sixth or seventh glass, to the girl whom you almost worship, and whose good opinion you rate higher than all the prizes of life. It's a pity you're not in a condition to properly appreciate yourself. Do you suppose she has any respect for you now? It is likely that she is experiencing an uncomfortable feeling of despising herself for loving you so much. How most New York girls hate the sight of a champagne bottle! And how we honor them for it—before supper—and thank God for the

womanly nature of our bright, honest, much-maligned belles ! In what corner of their hearts do they keep hidden, all unscathed by the fiery ordeals in which good society tries them, the purity, the honor, and the bravery with which they astonish and inspire us surface-living men, when need is ?

We began this article in no very serious mood, but as we think what a miserable disgrace to our society this continual wine-bibbing is, we almost wish we had not begun at all. The theme is too serious to be treated in our light way. Our pen is not strong enough, nor earnest enough, to write what we would have it. But, weak though our voice may be, it can cry shame on the society that sanctions this vile practice. Shame on you, young gentlemen, who crowd and press about the bottles, like swine round a trough, and before the world proclaim yourselves slaves to your appetites. If the greatest enjoyment of your lives is, as your actions proclaim, pouring

champagne down your throats, you had better keep out of ladies' parlors. The corner rum-shop is the sphere you are best fitted to grace. Double shame on you who, with the wine in your heads, drive into the ears of pure-hearted girls, such stuff "as would make angels weep."

The evil has reached to such a pitch, that before long, if wine is not banished from New York parties, decent women will not go to them. It is not an unimportant matter. This pernicious custom is sapping the foundations of social morality. Through it, our young men are becoming blackguards, and, that we should write it, our maidens are forgetting how to blush.



ON HOT-HOUSE CHILDREN.

TO one whose habits of life confine him to the better parts of the city, a child is a curiosity. Children do not flourish any better on the cold gray pavements of Fifth Avenue than violets would. Childhood is not fashionable. There is too much of it among common people. In good society there are babies ; there are also young ladies and gentlemen ; there are no children. Mrs. Centlivres glances round her parlors, where a children's party is in progress, and turns to us with a look of wonder. We mean it, madam ! You consider your guests as children, no doubt, but you are in error. Living as you have always done within the charmed circle of fashion, you are

not prepared to discuss the question understandingly ; it is doubtful if you have ever seen a genuine child. Your young friends bear the same relation to real children that the florist's bouquet you carry to-night does to the gracefully tangled bunches of wild roses one sees in the berry-stained hands of the brown little maidens who walk demurely school-ward along the grassy roadsides of Connecticut. They are hot-house reared.

Mrs. Centlivres looks as if she would like to contradict us a little, but her attention is claimed by two twelve-year-young ladies, who have just arrived—it is ten o'clock by-the-bye. So we seek a friendly mantel there to attitudinize, and observe. This is a children's party, at least so declared the engraved card with which our hostess honored us some ten days since. We should scarcely have known it otherwise. We can discern no difference between these young folks and the guests at Madame Millefleur's grand *après-midi*, whence

we have just come, except that they are somewhat less in stature, and that the young ladies, as a rule, do not wear trains. It is also to be remarked that they dance very much better.

In the days when we were not an interloper and looker-on at children's parties, they were very different from this. "Pillows and Keys," and other games, whereof unlimited labial salutations constituted the major part, were our amusement; the maiden aunt of the house was our musician; ice cream, lemonade, and "mottoes" the unwonted delicacies that made up the supper—to the youthful party-goer, the crown, and glory of the evening. Truly times are changed. Do you suppose these very dignified little ladies would be guilty of such vulgarity as "pillows and keys?" They have been entirely too well brought up to allow gentlemen to kiss them in public. They dance the most approved fashionable step; they flirt—scientifically too; they

occupy the stair-case. The ladies devote to each other's toilettes a scrutiny of which they are well worthy, being products of the genius of the most famous modistes of New York and Paris. In the supper room young gentlemen of fourteen and thereabouts condole with each other on the "dryness" of the entertainment, and up-stairs other young gentlemen are endeavoring to forget their vinous disappointment in the fumes of cigars, which appear Brobdignagian in contrast with their small smokers.

It is near midnight, when, making our adieux, and opening our opera hat, we depart to our club, but the lights are as bright, the music as seductive as ever; the second figure of the German is but just commenced, and nobody seems to think of leaving. We wonder what our grandmothers would have thought of this method of amusing children. Dear old ladies! At the sight of such iniquities their venerable eyes would have

assumed the dimensions of the treasured saucers that adorned the family side-board.

We suppose there are a great many people who will consider this a piece of sheer exaggeration. Let us state a fact or two. At a party last winter, given for a little girl, and where none of the guests were more than eighteen years old, several dozen of champagne were consumed, and decanters of liquor were provided in the gentlemen's dressing room. A young lady of the mature age of twelve, with whom we have the honor of a bowing acquaintance, has had all her dresses imported from Paris for the last two years. Not long ago we happened to be speaking in the presence of a small feminine cousin, about one of our intimates, a gentleman quite old enough to be the young ladies' father, when she gravely informed us that she knew Mr. Cordifrage, had met him at Minnie Mazette's party; that he was an *awful flirt*, and she had a *splendid* time with him. Her mother thought it in-

tensely funny. If that child's sainted grandmother had been living and within ear-shot, what a salutary spanking would then and there have been administered. But, alas for the children, spanking has gone out of fashion.

These, and like incidents, which every reader's own experience can furnish, prove the truth of the assertion that childhood is not to be found in good society. Are the aimless men and silly women who are to ride the topmost crest of fashion a generation hence, not well provided for? Train up a child in the way it should not go, and when it is old nothing short of a miracle will cause it to depart from it. The dear old Scripture text concerning "little children," that in all the glory of splurgey modern illumination, adorns so many Sunday school-rooms and juvenile boudoirs (nurseries are out of fashion, too), has become in our age a scathing satire and a solemn warning.



ON STAIRCASES.

NOTHING would seem less likely to become a subject of inquiry than the *cui bono* of a staircase. Wise men tell us that its prime object is to furnish a convenient means of communication between the different stories of a house. The ways of society teach its votaries that the staircase was meant to be sat upon, and was invented in the interests of flirtation. There is plausibility in the theory, for, after all, a ladder would answer the purpose of communication quite as well. But who could sit with comfort, or flirt with effect, upon a ladder? Twined with smilax, and Boston buds, the staircase is an altar raised in honor of the toy Cupid of good soci-

ety, a wooden altar well worthy of that very wooden deity.

Amateurish flirtation may be carried on with some success in the parlors, under cover of the friendly music, or even in the crash and clatter of the supper-room, but for genuine artistic work, the staircase is the true, the only place. So in the garret, where that ragged old *chiffonière*, Memory, stores her trumpery treasures, one is apt to find, half-buried in a mountainous heap of yellow love-letters, odd gloves, withered flowers, and very faded and old-fashioned hopes, a bit of an old staircase.

When a man first goes out he doesn't thoroughly understand himself, nor readily see through other people. So, when upon the first staircase of his youthful experience, he sits in an atmosphere of music and perfume, lint and violet powder, a pair of sweet dark eyes looking all sorts of unutterable things into his, while the owner and manager thereof takes a charming interest in him and his secret so-

ciety, and oh, joy unutterable ! finally lets him pin his badge among the shimmering laces that half conceal her white shoulders, and promises to keep it *forever* (which she does by-the-bye), it is but natural that he should offer his young life at her feet. And it is but natural, too, that when some weeks afterwards he sits looking at her wedding cards in a state of desperation, very pitiful and somewhat ridiculous, he should judge all women by her, and forever banish from his heart the foolish hopes and aspirations she first had taught him to know. It is a piece of that same old staircase he comes across now. To some men that experience does great harm, by smothering all their trust in the truth of women. To others it does good by teaching them not to entertain very fervent aspirations in regard to, nor any very high opinion of, the sort of young ladies given to spooning on the stairs.

Natural causes gave to the staircase the prominent position it occupies in the romances

of society. Staircase flirtation came in with the "German." This dance monopolizes the parlors after supper, and it is after supper that every one flirts most successfully. Outside of the charmed circle of the dance, the chair is unattainable, what resource is left but the staircase ?

Old friend, to whom the ways of society are a marvel and a mystery, did you ever notice a staircase in full operation ? The couples sit in the inverse order of desperation. On the lower steps the flirting is of a mild and extremely innocuous form ; as you pass upward it increases in earnestness, and the participants sit closer together, while in the dim light on the second story stairs you catch a glimpse of a dress-coat half hidden in the voluminous folds of laces and rich silk, dim indications of a group you must not closely scrutinize. Good society will not, dare not, tell you why that dress-coat "loves darkness rather than light," but Scripture answers the question promptly and truly.

A young girl on her first *entrée* into society shuns the staircase sedulously ; after a while she timidly ventures on the lower steps ; toward the end of the season you must cast your eyes well upward to find her, and when you do you will hardly recognize in her the bright innocent girl whom you remember. If you look for her next year you will find her far up on the second story stairs. Young wives, as often as not, occupy the post of honor, in these *tableaux vivants*.

From these facts a moral can be drawn. In this upward progression to half lights, and no lights at all, an evil is to be apprehended which you, old friend, would do well to suggest to the mothers of these young girls, and the husbands of these young wives.

"Ah!" says Mrs. Centlivres, "your remarks are extremely charming, Herr Katzenjammer ; but I quite fail too see what 'bad habit' you mean to point out." Really, I beg pardon ! I meant to refer to the very reprehensible cus-

tom many people have of freshly oiling their stairs just before their parties. You know how often the most delicate silks are ruined by contact with oiled staircases. And, *apropos* of nothing, did it ever occur to you what a pretty fanciful likeness these bright silks, so delicate, so fresh, so easily spotted, bear to a young girl's reputation? And, again *apropos* of nothing, I believe you have a daughter in society **Madame.**



ON CARRIAGE BILLS.

CORDIFRAGE dropped in to have a talk the other evening. We furnished him with an easy chair, and a pipe. After a while, thus Cordifrage: "What made you cut away from Millefleurs so early the other night? Had a German after you left. Danced with Nelly Sansargent. Took her there, you know. I made a lunatic of myself going home. You know how a fellow feels when he's driving home a nice girl from a late party—and its a long way up to her house. I was awfully spooney—it was the tea-woses, or the champagne, or something—got thinking all sorts of foolishness—talked some, too. Asked her if she didn't think it would be jolly

if we two could wide together always, all our lives. Yes, it *was* pwetty stwong ; meant it, though, for a minute. Oh ! she didn't say much ; gave a queer sort of laugh, and wanted to know who'd pay for the cawwiage. Bwight, wasn't it ? Bwought me to, wight off." Then Cordifrage lighted his pipe again, and informed me he thought he'd go to Europe, or somewhere, this summer. Wondered if they'd let a fellow volunteer if there was an Indian war. Then he indulged in cold-blooded cynicism on the subject of matrimony, and finally bade us "good night, old man !" and left.

We feel sorry for Cordifrage. He and Nelly Sansargent are very fond of each other. He is a good hearted, honorable fellow, and she is a charming little girl. If they weren't society-bred, they would be very happy married. But there is no likelihood that we shall ever have the pleasure of acting as their usher, and of making them a wedding present about

four times as expensive as we can afford. Cordifrage isn't rich enough.

When they were driving home from the Millefleur's, and he made the highly original speech we have recorded, we don't doubt that Nelly wanted to put her aristocratic little head, frizettes and all, on the padding of his manly shoulder, and murmur something appropriate to the occasion, and astoundingly spooney. Neither do we doubt that she wished, with all her heart, she *could* accept him. But her common sense—you see she hadn't taken any champagne—showed her that it was impossible. Who would pay for the carriage for the life-journey? Cordifrage knew he couldn't, and came to himself at once.

"But, gracious me!" says Mrs. Bonhomme, "why in the name of sense didn't the man ask her to walk. There'd be no carriage-bills to pay then?" "Mrs. Bonhomme you shock me! A lady of your position to advance such atrocious sentiment! Nelly Sansargent

walk !” So I pour forth my wrathful indignation until Mrs. Grundy is out of hearing (you see we all pay our little tribute of respect to that worthy woman), when I beg Mrs Bonhomme’s pardon, and try to answer her question. Madam, the idea you have suggested never once occurred to either of them. Nellie’s parents, who, by-the-bye, walked a good part of their married lives, have brought up that young lady in such a manner that she feels it to be her manifest destiny to ride, in other words, to marry well. Society has so trained Cordifrage that he would never even think of asking a girl in Nellie’s position to walk. Nellie must have her carriage, her opera box, and her Paris dresses ; her elegant home and her trained servants. She is “awfully in love” with Cordifrage, but she is not a bit in love with shabby gloves, unfashionable dresses, nor small slights ; and you see, Cordifrage is only one, and the other things are legion. Outside of the atmosphere of luxury she would not be

Nellie Sansargent. It is a condition precedent to her sunny temper, her brightness, her contentedness. She has nothing to expect from her father after marriage ; he is a merchant who has always spent religiously every cent of his annual income, and is just now drawing largely on his capital. In the natural course of mercantile and human events he must fail, and die. Cordifrage can't give her her carriage ; without it they cannot marry.

And now, dear Mrs. Bonhomme, don't deal out your virtuous indignation at the mercenary spirit of our friends with quite so heavy a hand. Excepting in the grand primal mistake of having fallen in love with each other, we justify them. They *ought not* to marry. Nellie is as society and her mother have made her, entirely incapable of happiness without a carriage. Cordifrage is but little better off. The habit of a lifetime cannot be got rid of as easily as a belle's back hair. If you think otherwise you are not versed in the natural

history of Ethiopians and leopards. So I say it is as much better that they two should live their lives apart, as negative not-unhappiness is better than positive misery. Do not blame Nellie and Cordifrage. Do you blame Chinese women for their distorted feet, or do you pity them.



ON PEW CUSHIONS.

YES, sir; they're paying, but they're nation hard on cushions." Thus said our sexton, discoursing on fashionable weddings. His remark puzzled us,—greatly! It was not until the other afternoon that it ceased to do so. Molly Centlivres was the Œdipus who solved the riddle. Molly would object to being called Œdipus, if she understood Greek, but she doesn't. We met her as we were walking up the avenue, musing on the pavonian trait in feminine nature which irresistibly draws it to the promenade as soon as it gets a spring suit. The communication of the sybil was properly obscure, and con-

veyed in the following language : " How d'ye do ? Going to a wedding at St. Gallus'. Haven't the least idea who the people are. Saw it advertised. Come with me, won't you ? " We went, of course, and were rewarded by meeting " everybody."

We were somewhat late, and the bridal party, for a wonder, early, so we were hardly seated when the wedding-march brought us to our feet. Then happened a dreadful thing. Miss Centlivres scorning the feebly-proffered assistance of my astonished hands, gave two nimble springs, and suddenly stood on the very slippery top of the pew-back, poised like Mercury, " new-lighted on some heaven-kissing hill," in a charming suit of pearl-grey tamise, and a silver chatelaine. Truly, we thought, her parents ought not to allow the poor girl to go about alone ; this is very melancholy. But as we gazed about the church, everywhere were like scenes. One would have been justified in imagining that the sacred edifice had

been suddenly transformed into the gymnasium of a female college, or that the Spartan games, wherein women contended, had been revived, and were being carried on, on an extensive scale about him. Such feats of strength and agility the monkeys upon a thousand hand-organs may never hope to equal. The daughters of Murray Hill were balancing on pew-backs in a manner that might cause Blondin, let alone their mothers, to blush ; they were leaping like chamois, and climbing like cats over such obstacles as intervened between them and desired coigns of vantage, standing niched like statues (of brass) in the dusty, embrasures of the windows, to the great and lasting detriment of their overskirts ; perched fearlessly, like vultures gazing from some rocky crag, on the very verge of the gallery rails, and performing other feats of nerve and agility unnamed as yet, and wholly indescribable. As we marked the effect of the sensible feminine boot of the period upon the wood-

work and upholstery, we understood the remark of our sexton.

Up to this point we will charitably suppose that Molly was actuated by a laudable desire to enlighten our ignorance. But surely there was no need that she should violate all the laws of propriety and equilibrium, by using an opera-glass to gaze upon the unblushing bride withal; nor that in the most audible manner, she should make sarcastic criticisms upon the bridal party, and all its belongings; nor that, with other young women on neighboring pew-backs she should sustain conversations, that drowned completely the voice of the officiating clergyman; nor that she should fight her way into the lobby as soon as the ceremony was over, there to gaze once more upon the bride, and audibly appraise her costume, with all the skill as well as good-breeding, of a milliner's apprentice.

After Miss Centlivres had dismissed us we reflected as follows: What is the subtle charm

of that combination of fuss and frivolity, point-lace and parson, a "swell" wedding, that so infallibly causes well-bred girls like Molly Centlivres, to behave like unto feminine Goshoots at a Government distribution? Isn't it the innate vulgarity of the display itself? Molly Centlivres has a strong sense of the fitness of things, and she feels at once, when she sees the gorgeous procession, inevitably reminding one of the "grand *entrée*" of an itinerant circus, that here, where bad taste holds court, good manners would be sadly out of place. When people, by means of bands of music, gorgeous dresses, elaborate processions, novel ceremonies, and extensive advertising, degrade the weddings of their daughters to the level of spectacular dramas, they must expect people to adopt their own low estimate of the dignity of the occasion.

It was made evident to us that this feminine semi-monkeyism of which we have discoursed, these ruined pew-cushions that lie so heavy on

our sexton's soul, were blamable to the manner in which, as a rule, the modern wedding is conducted, by our experience at a ceremony that we witnessed a day or two after the gymnastic exhibition at St. Gallus'. The bridal party was conspicuous only for its lack of anything designed to be conspicuous, and for being composed entirely of ladies and gentlemen. Consequently, all the amateur "Lulus," and "Leona Dares" maintained the positions usually assumed by ladies in public, and in all respects behaved themselves with a propriety as astounding as it was commendable. There was no giggling ; no betting on the question, whether or not the groom would "kiss her" ; no impertinent criticisms, and the cushions were innocent of boot-heels. It's the circus business that does the mischief ; after the grand *entrée*, acrobatic performances are of course in order.



ON ARTIFICIAL ORANGE BLOSSOMS.

OF course we went to Kitty Craig's wedding. The combined influence of the embossed paper, gigantic cards, startling monogram, and bad English, comprising our bidding to the feast, was not to be withstood. A splendid affair! Four ministers in the chancel, producing an unpleasant impression that they must have squabbled dreadfully over the quartering among them of one brief "Order for the Solemnization of Matrimony." An orchestra in the gallery, whose leader is evidently much at a loss for music, that shall be at once festive, and religious. All the Worth toilets, and biggest diamonds of society in the pews; and all the best-known dress-coats in the side aisles. The chancel looks a little like a fairy-bower, and

a great deal like the show-window of some ambitious florist. The ushers are a charming combination of grandeur, and condescension. The bridesmaids are visions of grace and loveliness. The father, a happy mingling of conscious dignity, and a ponderous waistcoat. The mother, a whole triumphal procession in her single self. The bridal trail is a Niagara of silk and lace, from whose base tumbling rapids of plaits, and puffings, and general fluffiness run far down the aisle. There are also a veil of point-lace, and a marvellous flounce of the same woman-worshipped fabric. As that achieved impossibility of the dress-maker's art floats grandly towards the altar, the church is resonant with a sound like to that which the multitudinous street-boy most affects when some astonishing pyrotechnic achievement meets his delighted gaze. Each of the ministers makes as much as possible of his own quarter-section of the service, the band strikes up "Ever be Happy"

with renewed confidence, and, after about an hour's shouting, we find our carriage, and hie us to the reception. We are immediately captured by a roving usher, and in due form introduced to the groom and the bride and the parents thereof, all of whom we have known intimately for the last five years, whereupon we smile with the cheerful spontaneity of a Dutch doll, make some inane remark, with the word "congratulate" in it, and drift away.

The religious ceremony was gorgeous ; its social supplement is sublime. Such dresses ! Such jewels ! Such flowers ! Such music ! Such a supper ! We dance a little ; we inspect the array of presents, the *spolia opima* of this social triumph, and wax wroth because that silver vase, for which we have run in debt so generously, is not put in a good place, and our card does not show ; we eat a little we drink a great deal, and bye and bye we go home, and feel not the slightest human inte-

rest in the present or future happiness of the man and woman thus spectacularly joined together.

We are not particularly callous, and Kittie Craig, a merry, unspoiled, good-hearted girl, has always been one of our best friends ; but the fact is, that she and her husband were so completely overwhelmed by an avalanche of rose-tinted cardboard, big bouquets, German musicians, African waiters, champagne bottles, presentation silver, and Paris toilets, that all the individuality was crushed out of them, and it is not easy to be sympathetic in regard to lay figures, and clothes-pegs.

A whisper has been going around society, that the marriage was entirely arranged by the parents, and that Kittie is very unhappy. This is utter nonsense. It may be laid down as a general principle to be used in testing such reports, that the *mariage de convenance* is an exotic that does not flourish in this climate. Moreover, being an intimate friend of

the Craigs, we happen to know that both the old people were bitterly opposed to the match, and Kittie had to fight for her love, and her own way like a little heroine. As for Van Bourse, the bride-groom, we wish that these scandal-mongers could have been in camp with us in the North Woods last summer, and slept or tried to in our place next him, and had him keep them awake all night, rapturizing about his "dear little girl."

Then would they at once have been completely convinced, and justly punished, and we saved from the necessity of sleeping in the day-time. We say "punished," but, after all, we don't blame them very much. Without our superior information, we should have come away with the same impression. Do not the artificial orange-blossoms of the bridal-wreath painfully suggest that the blossom-hopes, the white love, the woven joys, that they but symbolize, are just as artificial, just as false? Does not the lavish generosity

so ostentatiously displayed in the wedding gifts compel the thought, "bought with a price ; married for money ?" Are not the grand procession, the lavish decoration of the person of the bride, sacrificial in all their suggestions ?

And now leaving out of view the weightier objections to these wedding pageants, we would simply ask, considering them from the most frivolous point of view—are they not in abominably bad taste ? When a girl is really sacrificed, her hand sold and her heart thrown in, by her parents, it is well to cover up the ugly fact with all the frippery that New York and Paris can furnish. But when our good friends fall in love honestly, and marry happily, we go to church to see them, and enjoy their happiness—not to look at an exhibition of imported dry-goods ; to hear their familiar voices as they vow to love, honor, and cherish each other, till death them do part—not the melodious utterances of a German band "intoning the service."

Madam Millefleurs says that when Adele marries, (Adele is at present of the charming but not quite marriageable age of six) she is going to teach these people one fundamental rule of composition—don't make your accessories more than twenty times as prominent as your central figures. Madame Millefleurs has a very neat way of putting things.



ON "THESE PRESENTS."

KITTIE CRAIG'S we mean. We made but passing mention of them when we spoke of her wedding. They were worthy of better treatment. The long table in the second floor front-room was flooded with luxury, that in it's overflow had inundated the mantel and overwhelmed any number of stands and brackets about the room. Bronzes and mantel setts for every room in the bride's prospective home, not omitting the kitchen ; shawls that an Oriental princess might have sighed for ; laces filmy and beautiful as cob-webs woven by spiders of cultured taste, and artistic skill ; silver in every form of table plenishment ; forests of forks, groves

of spoons ; and napkin-rings, knife-rests, salt-cups, butter-knives, bouquet-holders, handkerchief-rings, and such small deer, in quantities to be measured only by the bushel. And last, lying in solitary state on a silver salver, a slip of paper—whereon W. B. Craig, in his boldest hand, directed the Forty Second National Bank to pay to Catherine Craig Van Bourse or order, a six figured number of dollars, startling to look upon.

A charming sight, indeed ! It made our hearts glad, to gaze upon these simple tributes of love, given cheerfully by each friend according to his means, without one thought of display, or one feeling of bitterness that others had given more richly. When we thought of the loving hands that had—bah, what a burlesque it all was ! The fact that the presents were exhibited at all, showed a love of display not at all to the credit of civilized people. The two detectives disguised as waiters indicated a pleasing confidence in the honor

of the guests, didn't they ! The visiting card of the donor affixed to every gift, told of the very meanest sort of vanity—and if we could only read the motives that prompted this lavish outpouring of wealth ! Suppose we try.

For instance there was our own present. We sent that vase, a thing far more expensive than we could afford, because people knew that we were intimate with the Craigs, and would immediately suspect the reason we did not give something handsome—namely that we are too poor.

There, too, was that lovely pearl sett from Molly Centlivres, one of the bridesmaids, given because she expects to be married herself some day—Kittie will be sure to remember—and Mr. Craig is *so* rich.

That magnificent silver tea-service from old Van Bourse, is a bid for papa Craig's good will, with an ultimate view of getting him and his money into the American Burglar Indemnity Company—a magnificent enterprise,

sadly in need of capital. While the De Browns, the De Jones, and the De Smiths have poured forth their butter-knives and salt-spoons like water—not because they care one button for bride or groom—but for fear that people should comment unfavorably on their omission to do so,

The custom of making presents on weddings, and the anniversaries of weddings has grown into a nuisance of magnificent proportions. Vanity causes people to make expensive presents to people for whom they care absolutely nothing ; common politeness compels the recipients to accept them.

Mrs. Bonton, for instance, wishes to call her friends together to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of her wedding-day, and sends out her cards to about every one she knows. Among others, Thomas, Richard, and Henry receive them. Now, these three worthy people ought to be and are well aware that Mrs. Bonton has as much silver as she

knows what to do with, and is not in the habit of begging her furniture from chance acquaintances. Notwithstanding, they one and all exclaim, "Well, we *must* give something," and inly groan at the expense.

They don't want to make the presents, and Mrs. Bonton knows it; she would much rather they wouldn't, and they know that. For all that, Thomas and the rest of them run deeply in debt for gorgeous ice-pitchers, and ornate coffee pots, and therewith overwhelm Mrs. Bonton, to her great embarrassment. Thus do they make a show of wealth, and so outshine other people. They use Mrs. Bonton merely as a hook whereon to hang their own glories for exhibition. She feels this, and naturally finds it somewhat difficult to properly thank Thomas, Richard, and Henry for their "charming gifts"

We were talking at Kittie's wedding to Madame Millefleurs about this matter, dolefully exclaiming over the manifold miseries

that spring therefrom. "Why, its the easiest thing in the world to stop it," said she. "Its only a righteous retribution for that dreadful violation of good taste, making an exhibition of wedding presents. Do you suppose the people, who sent all those things would have done it, if they had thought no one but the bride's family was to see them? Not a bit of it." We mused, and said nothing about that silver vase.



ON LATCH-KEYS.

WHEN the youthful Englishman of noble birth visits our favored land ; when he pauses for a while in his journey to Buffalo, where he purposes to add new lustre to his rural fame by stalking the timid bison ; when he is received by the good society of our truly democratic city with great rejoicing and overwhelming adulation, he sees much whereat to aim his single eye-glass, much to call forth his national ejaculation—
“ By Jove ! ”

He goes to a dinner-party, and is presented by a young gentleman, whose acquaintance with him dates from a period of time

five minutes back, to Nellie Sansargent. She beams upon him, and a short time afterward, as her escort is about to lead her to the table, graciously informs him that she will be glad to have him call on her at her home. After much trepidation, and with the feeling that he is compromising himself strong upon him, he visits her; she receives him entirely unchaperoned, talks Shakespeare, and the musical glasses, and sends him back to his hotel in a state of bewilderment, truly pitiable.

Soon after he is the astounded recipient of a note adorned with the Sansargent crest, a crest whose like no pursuivant ever saw or dreamed of. This missive informs him that Miss Sansargent would like to have him accompany her to the opera that evening, moreover that the carriage will call for him at eight. "By Jove!" is his only comment as he indites his acceptance.

He is not aware that there are but few

people in New York who have so little regard for the feelings of their coachmen as to use their own equipages at night ; consequently, when he discovers that Miss Sansargent is going with him alone in a hired hack, in charge of a strange driver, his whole mental system is reduced to a nebulous cloud of incipient “ By Joves ! ”

On leaving the academy he proposes, in a sudden rush of audacity, a *petit souper* at Delmonico's. Before the words are fairly spoken, he feels he has gone too far—she will resent the insult, and what can he offer in excuse? In the most matter-of-fact way imaginable, she accepts.

It is after midnight when they reach the Sansargent mansion. The house is wrapped in slumber. Nellie calmly produces a latch-key, lets herself in, and bids her awe-stricken escort good-night.

The young Englishman of noble birth pursues his travels. He gazes upon the falls

of Niagara ; he learns that the bounding bison does not infest the state of New York, as much as he formerly did, and returns to his island home, by so much a wiser man. But Niagara, and his newly acquired knowledge of natural history cannot drive from his mind the recollection of Nellie. Often do thoughts of her send a puzzled look across his honest and somewhat vacuous countenance, and cause a lambent "By Jove!" to play about his lips.

If he would confine himself to wondering, no harm would be done. Unfortunately, misled by a natural though entirely unwarranted confidence in his own reasoning power, he forms an opinion ; and with such clearness as his education and mode of speech will allow, expresses it. Being a gentleman, he did not, during his acquaintance with Miss Sansargent, attempt to act in accordance with this opinion. Had he done so he would probably have found reason to alter it.

Nevertheless, if the young Englishman of

noble birth should emphatically declare that New York parents are culpably careless in regard to their daughters, we should hesitate about contradicting him.

Most of our girls are allowed to go into society as early as they please, and once out are left free to follow their own devices. If this lack of parental supervision were grounded on confidence in the unblemished honor of the New York society man, it might be justified—on the plea of insanity. But it is not. Its sole cause is the selfish indolence of ladies whose bounden duty it is to watch carefully the society into which they allow their children to enter. We doubt if there are in New York a score of mothers who go into society, or know anything at all about the characters and antecedents of their daughters' male acquaintances.

Somebody asked Prince Napoleon once, what he thought of society in New York. He answered that he had seen none, he had

only met boys and girls at dancing parties.
There is a certain suggestion in that speech
worthy of your consideration, oh, mothers in
Israel!



ON AN OBJECT OF PITY.

THE saddest sight that meets our eyes as we walk the streets of our great, hard-hearted city, is that too frequent one of a promising young man stricken down in the very morning of life by the English fever. "I never heard of the disease." You astonish us! Allow us to point out to you one of its victims. The symptoms are unmistakable. Here's poor Tom Jacchus—a very bad case, indeed. Tom was a splendid fellow before he went abroad, but while in London he caught the fever, and now look at him! He has lost his erect, manly carriage and shambles along with his head and shoulders bent forward, and his arms swinging aimlessly in the air. His appetite is so depraved by his illness that he has no taste for ordi-

nary food and drink, but evinces a morbid craving for such culinary abominations as Welsh rarebits and golden bucks, and will drink nothing but Bass' ale and a beverage which he calls "arf n' arf."

You see he has nearly lost the faculty of speech ; he is constantly at a loss for a word, and hesitates in a really painful manner. What he does say is almost unintelligible, consisting for the most part of the ejaculation "aw." He designates ordinary things by strange names of his own that are utterly incomprehensible to people outside of his immediate family, whose members have gradually learned to make out what he is trying to say.

Tom is childish about many things. He is utterly at a loss in the street unless he has a slim, neatly-rolled umbrella in his hand, no matter how fine the day may be. A betting book is also necessary to his happiness, for he is continually making bets on all possible

subjects. It is one of his amiable weaknesses to make his entries of these wagers in shillings and pence sterling. He is much pleased if you notice this, and says: "Yes—haw—cahn't get the hang of yuah widuculous cuwwency, you know—haw—weally." His greatest delight, however, is in his single eyeglass; he will amuse himself with this for hours at a time, and when he succeeds in making it keep its place in his eye for a minute or two, his artless satisfaction is pleasant to look upon.

His mind, of course, is utterly gone, but his disease has not assumed a violent form; he passes most of his time in a dreamy state of placidity that nothing can disturb save the intelligence of a new English fashion. This always throws him into the greatest excitement. He cannot be calmed until he is satisfied that he has imitated it.

If he procures a new English garment he cannot be persuaded to lay it aside for an instant. When he first had his Ulster he used

to drive in it, walk the avenue in it, make calls in it, and go to afternoon receptions in it. His mother declares that for quite a while he insisted on sleeping in it.

He never stops to think of the origin of what he imitates, or for what uses or occasions it is intended. When those big dust colored Melton overcoats were introduced for driving, Tom invariably wore one at the opera over his dress suit. Last summer he saw a picture in *Punch* of a young man shooting in Knickerbockers. He immediately got himself a suit of that description, and wore it while making morning calls. This kept him happy for a month. You remember when he had his head-gear decorated with brilliant insects made of metal! Well, that was in consequence of his having seeing an English entomologist with his lately caught prizes pinned to his hat. His latest eccentricity is combing his hair over his ears after the fashion first indulged in by Bill Sikes and gentleman of his ilk, if we may trust Cruik-

shank. These ornaments were originally known as "thief-locks," but are now honored with the name of a certain ligneous young English actor, who wears his hair in the manner indicated, and with whom Miss Jacchus, Tom's sister, is idiotically in love.

It is utterly impossible to restrain Tom, and as his vagaries really injure nobody, perhaps it is as well not to interfere with him. The only persons who feel angry at him are the young Englishmen whom he aspires to resemble. They, not appreciating his condition, furiously do rage at him ; for they imagine that his conduct and appearance are deliberately designed to cast ridicule upon them ; that he makes a walking caricature of himself, with malice prepense and aforethought. O, valorous Britons, restrain your wrath, the veriest savages respect such an affliction as Tom's. Believe us, his admiration for you is sincere. He is no bitter satirist. He is simply an amiable idiot.



ON SEALING WAX.

SOME years since Cordifrage entered his name as a student at Columbia College Law School. During his two years' course he smoked many cigars in the school library, and went to several Cigarette Club suppers. He passed a triumphant examination, guessing right the second time when asked if a conveyance of real estate could be effectual without a seal, and answering promptly and correctly that he didn't know, when the examining officers inquired of him the nature of the rule in Shelley's case. So Cordifrage is an attorney and counsellor of the Supreme Court of the State of New York. Within the last month he has been

seized with a fit of industry and has opened an office. We stopped in to see him one morning not long ago. We admired his furniture and his office boy. This young gentleman informed us, with unnecessary frankness, that his employer never got down town before twelve. That hour was not far distant, so we waited.

If the number of Cordifrage's letters is any index of the extent of his business, he must be doing very well indeed. There were at least a dozen dainty epistles on his desk, directed in that sprawling hand-writing, exclusively affected by fashionable young women. We noticed that most of the tinted envelopes were closed in the old-fashioned manner with huge seals of colored wax. Knowing the extremely *ton-ish* character of Cordifrage's feminine acquaintance, we concluded that this was the very latest freak of Dame Fashion, and found therein material for thought.

After mature consideration we have come to the conclusion that this revival of sealing-wax deserves to be encouraged.

We have always sympathized with the punctilious gentleman who, on receiving for the first time a letter secured in the present salivary manner, conceived himself insulted, and challenged his innovating correspondent.

Gummed envelopes, although excusable in the haunts of trade, ought never to have been admitted to those select epistolary circles, wherein *billet-doux* move and have their airy being. Doubtless one of Cordifrage's letters is from Nellie Sansargent. We can fancy him like a true lover as he is, musing over the paper her fair hand has rested on ; or studying the delicate device left upon the wax by a seal fresh from her sweet lips, and finding it's every suggestion pleasing and inclining to spooniness. Had she closed her letter after the too common method, could he do this? Alas, no. The thought of his

charmer in the act of "sticking" the envelope would at once put romance to ignominious flight.

And we are glad of this revival of sealing-wax for another reason. It is an indication, faint but unmistakable, of a revolt against inelegant haste in one branch, at least, of social life. The gummed envelope was invented to save time ; it enabled letters to be enclosed in a hurry, and as a natural consequence, they soon came to be written in a hurry. The epistles that young ladies nowadays indite on the most ceremonious occasions will not bear comparison with the ordinary correspondence of their grandmothers, for style and polish. Their everyday notes to acquaintances, familiar letters, and the like, are hurried, careless, slovenly in writing and composition, not infrequently ill-spelt, and always leaving so much to the imagination of the reader that it is anything but easy to discover the meaning of the writer. But sealing-

wax has come in again ; it is elegant and deliberate ; it will not condescend to consider, even, so vulgar a thing as haste ; it will reform all this.

Welcome back to our midst, oh, sealing-wax ! We shall be glad to see you extend your influence in New York society outside of your present epistolary limits, for better is overmuch formality than the very least degree of impropriety.



ON RED ROSES.

MINNIE MAZETTE did us the honor to take us shopping with her the other morning. From self-disciplinary motives we never neglect an opportunity to accompany a young lady on a shopping expedition. We know of nothing better calculated to teach a man patience and self-repression; nothing more likely to inspire him with a wholesome respect for the "staying" powers of the weaker sex.

Our tired feet had threaded the hosiery-hung and walking-gentlemen-haunted mazes of dry-goods shops innumerable; our stock of patience was almost exhausted; and our profitably-spent morning nearly gone, when Min-

nie paused with one foot on the step to say, "Drive to Madame Nathalie's, James." As I followed her into the *coupé* she remarked encouragingly, "the last place, Herr Katzenjammer, and I won't be a minute, I only want some red roses."

The purchase of the red roses was not so quickly completed as Minnie had promised. There seemed to be a misunderstanding of some sort. Nathalie with practised skill exhibited clusters of pale pink, sprays of rich crimson buds nestling in their leaves, every dainty and delicate device of imitative art in the way of roses that could be imagined, but nothing suited Minnie. She was impatient; her little boot tapped the floor fretfully. Finally she said, "Herr Katzenjammer, won't you be kind enough to step to the door and see if James is there?" Of course I flew to obey her, but not too quickly to hear her say: "How stupid you are, Nathalie! I don't want them for trimming. Haven't you"—We lost

the rest. When we returned from our errand with the important information that James was there and seemingly in good health, Minnie appeared to be suited. She held a bunch of enormous roses of a bright scarlet color, unlike anything that ever bloomed, and such as no lady ever wore since artificial flowers were invented. She looked at these monstrosities approvingly, rubbed one of them across the back of her light glove, remarked that the color didn't come off very well, but she supposed they'd have to do, and took them.

We are not especially inquisitive, but we could not refrain from asking Miss Mazette what she proposed to do with her red cabbages. She obligingly informed us that she was going to make an omelette of them. Slight though our culinary knowledge is we could not but see the inherent improbability of this explanation, and left Minnie finally, without any information that we could consider reliable.

Spurred on by a laudable desire for use-

ful knowledge, we pursued our inquiries among the young ladies of our acquaintance as to what Minnie Mazette could possibly want of these absurd red roses. Not one of them had the faintest idea.

Last night we called on Nellie Sansargent. Cordifrage was there, of course. We took occasion to question Nellie on the rose subject. Nellie was utterly unable to afford us the slightest information.

Cordifrage left with us. "Katzenjammer," said he, "don't you weally know what Minnie Mazette got those wed woses for?" "Of course not"—and then a ray of hope broke on us. "Do you?" "Well, wather. She wubs them on her cheeks—this way—the wed comes off, you know. They all do it. I thought everybody knew that." Then Cordifrage flitted off to his club, and we passed homeward, meditating.

"Can such things be!" How many times have we admired the beautiful color on Min-

ine's round cheek. How often have we listened to her scathing satires upon certain elderly wall-flowers, who are more indebted to Madam Rachel than to Dame Nature for their youthful and somewhat porcelaneous complexions ! With what unfaltering trust have we heard her declare that she wouldn't have such horrid stuff on her face for anything in the world ! How can we believe this dreadful statement of Cordifrage's ?

Is it possible that Miss Mazette sees a difference, inappreciable by us, between red roses and the rouge pot ? She knows that rouge is undisguisable ; she knows that it is ruinous to the skin ; she knows, and empathically pronounces, it to be "common." Can she have persuaded herself that the coloring matter that rubs off from Nathalie's red roses is free from these objections ? No ! Perish the thought ! We will not allow ourselves to believe that one of the brightest and cleverest of New York belles can be so incomprehensibly silly.

We utterly refuse to entertain Cordifrage's erroneous hypothesis, and so our question remains unanswered. Somebody enlighten our ignorance. What did Minnie Mazette want of those red roses ?



ON BRASS BUTTONS.

AMID the contents of the six paper bags in the British Museum that contain the material for the autobiography of Herr Professor Diogenes Teufelsdröckh, the distinguished author of that well-known work, "Die Kleider, ihr Werden und Wirken," we doubt not are hidden many profound observations concerning buttons—observations that, had they ever seen the light, would leave subsequent philosophers naught to say on this most important subject. But the Herr Professor's editor has unaccountably allowed the world to lose these precious thoughts; wherefore we may, perchance, venture a word upon

a very small subdivision of that mighty theme, buttons in their relation to the Cosmos.

Let us not wastefully consume time and space in excursions among far distant regions of the universe, where we may witness and deeply consider the influence of buttons in other systems and other worlds than ours. Neither let us range too freely the contemptible superficies of our own little dust-speck, lest the exaltation of buttons in the Cathayan Empire, the superfluity of buttons in the courts of Europe, the lamentable lack of buttons in the wilds of Patagonia, and the great differences in degree and kind of culture on these facts dependent, should detain us amid speculations, dignified and instructive, but for whose full consideration life is far too short.

We will not go outside the charmed circle of the society of our own city and will devote ourselves to a slight consideration of one weighty office that a particular sort of buttons, those of glittering brass, stamped with our

country's eagle, fill therein—a function that no other earthly power has ever been able to perform, to wit: taking the conceit out of the youth of the period. *Similia similibus curantur.*

The youth aforesaid is, prior to his first experience of the effect of brass buttons upon the feminine mind, of opinion that in the heart of every maiden rises a fair altar whereon his image is enshrined. Sweet youth, great is thy delusion! Truly the shrine is there, but in its most sacred place rests not thy simulacrum, but a glittering brazen button.

At military balls in the city, and at Governor's Island hops the brass button exerts a certain amount of power, but if we would see it's perfect work we must go to West Point. Here the brass button reigns supreme, making of ordinary men demi-gods; dazzling the eyes, and inflaming the hearts of the daughters of the land; and here does it most effectively perform the painful duty we have referred to.

Unto this button-dominated region, thither led by fate and fashion to receive his salutary lesson, the tender youth proceeds. Elate with many a social triumph, with the consciousness of good looks, of perfect clothes, of irreproachable connections, of a swing in the "Boston" peculiarly his own, he goes gaily to his humiliation. The omnibus climbs up the hill and passes the camp. He sees for the first time a cadet, and comparing his ungraceful dress, his ridiculous collar, his freckled, beardless face, and close-cropped hair, with his own sartorial and personal advantages, he magnanimously resolves to be condescending to the poor fellow, and tell Minnie to dance with him once in a while—what time that first-class man, who is known all over the post as "Minnie Mazette's cadet," remarks to himself "Another cit! poor devil'" and smiles grimly.

Ah, hapless "cit," does no warning of his fate reach him, as dress-coated and immaculately gloved, he saunters toward the "Aca-

demic," purposing to participate in the "hop"? He enters his purgatory gaily, and after watching for a minute the frantic gyrations, which realize to the average cadet-mind the idea of uancing, he determines to show these gray-coated barbarians what a Boston looks like, and seeks a partner, seeks and does not find. Even Minnie Mazette, for whose sweet sake he has come to the Point, repudiates indignantly the mere suggestion of throwing over Cadet Smith for him. "My cadet! The idea!" Cadet Smith is short of stature, with trout-like complexion, and rosy hair, and he dances like a particularly clumsy bear on especially hot irons; but he is glorious in brass buttons, and our handsome youth is but as the small dust in the balance.

The night's experience is a foretaste of the day's miseries. At guard-mounting he contemplates the sunny side of Minnie's parasol while she shades therewith the manly countenance of Lieutenant Sabretasche, and deigns

her worshipper in mufti no word nor look. At artillery drill he sits disconsolate and alone on a weak-kneed camp stool, and enviously watches the cadet officer of the day, as he stands sanctified by his buttons, the object of the adoring glances of a group of girls, of whom Minnie is the chief. At band practice he smokes a solitary cigar while cadet Smith leans over the wheel of Minnie's pony phaeton, and talks about the North view. He is snubbed, slighted and neglected by every one ; the very chambermaids despise him. He goes back to town a wiser and far more endurable youth. The brass buttons have done their work.

We have had this sad experience and have objurgated the brass buttons in our inmost souls ; but as years roll on and wisdom increases we look upon them more kindly. As we recall what we were in the days before we encountered them, as we gaze upon the society man of mature years who has never been to

West Point, and think that, were it not for brass buttons, and their chastening influence, we might have grown up to be like him, we thank them from the bottom of our heart.

Oh, callow denizen of the Knickerbocker Club, thou who thinkest that the earth, and the waters under the earth, contain not thine equal! Oh, youthful Adonis who importest thy coats from Poole's, who drivest a gorgeous dog-cart, and reignest supreme on the clubhouse piazza at Jerome Park! Oh, young man from Boston who makest broad thy phylacteries and thine A's; and, in thine own conceit, art the highest type of American culture! Wouldst thou find thy proper level, and become sufferable among men? If so, get thee to West Point and measure thy attractions against those possessed by a brass button.



ON CRAWLEY SLYME.



SHORT time ago we heard of something that pleased us immensely. We mean the thorough and effective horse-whipping administered to that well-known society man, Crawley Slyme, Esq., by Harry Van Bourse.

When the news of this little affair reached us we were utterly astonished. The doctrine that men are to be held personally responsible for their social sayings and doings has so long been practically obsolete—every attempt to enforce that doctrine in the old fashioned way has raised such a storm of ridicule—that it seems now-a-days as if a man might with entire impunity wag his tongue about his neighbor,

his neighbor's wife and neighbor's daughters in such manner as he should see fit.

In this belief Crawley Slyme had lived and moved and had his being. He had told scandalous lies about half the girls in town. He had said that Molly Centlivres was "just about as fast as they come." He had opined publicly that Cordifrage and Nellie Sansargent were a couple of profane-adjectived fools. He had offered countless impertinences to most of the ladies who are unfortunate enough to know him. He had never been called to account. He never expected to be. The idea had never entered his head. He and hosts of his compeers said and did just such things every day of the year.

Suddenly, lightning flashed from a cloudless sky, the vengeful horsewhip descended on his shrinking shoulders, and every decent man who heard of that glorious thrashing felt a thrill of unmingled satisfaction.

But when we told our lady friends about it,

such a cry of feminine indignation as went up! "Thanks, for the news!" said Madame Millefleurs, looking like a statue of contempt. "I shall not be at home to Mr. Van Bourse hereafter. I don't care to know prize fighters." Mrs. Mazette had "always thought before, that Mr. Van Bourse was a gentleman;" Mrs. Centlivres said it was "so very low," and even the girls Minnie and Molly were very non-committal: "No doubt Mr. Slyme deserved it, but then—horsewhipping—it's so sort of common, you know." And so Van Bourse was snubbed, and Slyme was condoled with.

Had Crawley Slyme lived a hundred years ago he might have been a half way decent fellow outwardly. He would have been shy of making free with ladies' names; he would have hesitated before expressing uncalled-for opinions of people; he would have been chary of spreading scandalous reports. Why! Because he would have been held accountable for every foul word he uttered. Because, if he had

dared to say of Molly Centlivres and Minnie Mazette what he does now-a-days, unmolested, he would have had duels enough on his hands within twelve hours to last him, *certainly*, the rest of his lifetime. Because if he had said that Cordifrage and Nellie Sansargent were a pair of fools he would probably have found out what the point of Cordifrage's small-sword felt like very shortly afterward. Because the manners of the time would have taught him that men valued their honor and the good repute of their women far more than either his life or their own.

We don't advocate duelling, but once in a while we hear some of Crawley's speeches and remembering that Mme. Millefleurs will cut us if we kick him, we can't help thinking that the defunct system had its merits after all.

Nowhere else in the world is the practice of duelling so utterly under a cloud, so contemned, ridiculed and despised as in New York. Nowhere else are there received into society

so many men who have not the shadow of an idea as to what the ordinary rules of honor demand of them, who are liars, sneaks, cheats and worse, whose claims to the title of gentleman are beneath contempt. These two facts must be taken together.

Now, Madam Millefleurs and ladies, you have helped greatly in laughing duelling out of New York. You have helped in a good work, but you left it unfinished. You should not only have abolished duelling, you should have substituted for it some equally efficient check upon Crawley Slyme. This you have failed to do ; so when duelling went out, evil-speaking, lying and slandering came in. Crawley Slyme is rampant. It is your fault, and instead of helping us to crush him, you defend him with your false and foolish delicacy.

Madame Millefleurs and ladies, do your duty ! Turn your wrath upon Crawley Slyme, don't bow to him on the avenue, don't invite him to your houses, don't present him to your

daughters, and the next time some energetic individual horsewhips or otherwise maltreats him, don't be silly and treat said individual as you did poor Van Bourse. Crawley Slyme *must* be argued with physically ; his soul *must* be touched by means of pains in the body. So, don't you see, if you object to vulgar methods of inflicting such pain as "ungentlemanly," you are undoing your own work, and recommending a return to rapiers and duelling-pistols. Crawley Slyme must be suppressed. Nothing can alter that determination. But ladies, if horse-whips and fists are objectionable to you, we are perfectly willing to resort to more polished weapons.



ON BLUE AND WHITE.

YESTERDAY afternoon, in common with many other New York men, we felt unreasonably disappointed. We had received this dispatch from a friend at Saratoga Lake :—"Cornell wins, Columbia second, broken oar." We had not expected Columbia to come in first again this year. She had done better than we had supposed she would. Nevertheless, when we read that despatch we were utterly disgusted. "Columbia second, broken oar." So near winning! That was the trouble. If she had been third or fourth, with no accidents, we shouldn't have cared half so much. We put out of sight a blue and white handkerchief, a large portion

of which had been flaunting gaily from our breast-pocket all the morning and came up town dejected.

We thought over the matter all the afternoon, and the more we thought the more disgusted we grew. It was utterly absurd and unreasonable on our part, but we doubt not that most Columbia men had the same feeling for a time yesterday afternoon.


Last evening we sauntered into Gilmore's, and the first person we saw was Minnie Mazette. Mollie Centlivres and Tommy Jacchus were in a box with her. Both girls were, we knew, ardent champions of Columbia, but instead of looking properly downcast, they sat with knots of blue and white ribbon proudly displayed on their shoulders, looking as happy as if our boys had won the race in sixteen minutes with an eighth of a mile of clear water between them and their nearest followers.

In our then frame of mind we could see

no reason for this triumphal exhibition. In fact it irritated us, and we went up to the box in anything but an agreeable mood. Without stopping to say good evening, Miss Mazette and Miss Centlivres with one accord demanded : " Where are your colors ? " We explained that we did not see any occasion for a display of colors. That we thought they were much better out of sight, and that if they would take our advice they would at once remove their ribbons, that only made them conspicuous and absurd. That—but we got no further. " You ought to be ashamed of yourself " exclaimed Miss Mazette.

" If you are going to talk like that, you might have better staid away " remarked Miss Centlivres with freezing dignity. " What horrid things men are ! " went on Minnie generalizing after the fashion of her sex. " I think they're too hateful to live ? I don't care if our crew didn't win, they did splendidly, and I'd wear a blue and white dress with stripes a

foot wide if I had one. I'd like to know if they didn't beat Yale, and Harvard, and all the **other creatures**—with only five oars, too. You don't expect them to win every race, do you? You act like a big baby, crying after the moon. Don't you suppose every one of them tried his very best for old Columbia? Don't you suppose they feel bad enough about it, without your doing all you know to make them feel worse? Instead of being proud of what they have done—a great deal more than you ever thought they would—and making a time over them, you're provoked that they didn't win, just because they came so near it. Gracious, I wonder where Columbia would have been if some of your critical gentlemen had the pulling to do! No matter; we girls are not ashamed of our colors, we'll wear them anywhere, and when the crew comes back we'll treat them so sweet that they won't care a bit about your opinion—and if you don't say you're ashamed of yourself and put



on your colors this minute I'll never speak to you again as long as I live—so there !”

Minnie's speech was a little incoherent, somewhat illogical and rather personal in parts, but it had the true ring and her whole heart was in what she said. We did feel ashamed of ourself and owned it. We told her that she was a little trump—which was rather unnecessarily familiar by-the-bye—and that we were proud of the gallant fellows who have twice in succession beaten Yale and Harvard. We flung our blue and white handkerchief once more to the breeze. We intend to keep it conspicuously displayed and to cheer our best for the Columbia crew on every occasion.



THE GLORIOUS FOURTH.

TOMMY JACCHUS is still suffering from the English fever. We met him at the club the other evening, and he was in a bad way, quite delirious in fact. His ravings on this occasion took the form of a violent and incoherent attack upon one of our most cherished customs. Thus Tommy, to a large audience: "Celebwate—all wight celebuate, but don't make such a lot of blasted fools of yourselves, you know. Why its dweadful. Just when a fellah wants to sleep, fellahs wing bells, and fiwer off guns, and set off—aw—little wound wed things—you know, make a beastly wow—Chinese fellah's make 'em—ya's fiwer cwackers; that's

it. Then your wegiment fellahs go twampin' wound getting sunstwuck—gweat fun. Fellahs get blown up and shot—why its howwible. Cahn't dine out, cahn't wide, cahn't do anything all day such a beastly wow, enough to dwive a fella cwazy."

We could hardly restrain ourselves as we heard these unpatriotic, these blasphemous sentences from the lips of an American. But we must make allowances for Tommy. It needs a stronger intellect than his to see. The underlying reason for our obstreperous manner of celebrating the solemn anniversary of our National Independence.

Did not our forefathers bleed and die for liberty's sake? Did they not face fire and steel unflinchingly? Did they not make forced marches under blazing suns and skies of molten brass? Were they not blown to pieces by bursting fire-arms and exploding magazines? Were not their homesteads burnt over their heads?

Is it not, therefore, most fit and proper that we, their descendents, should once a year commemorate their glorious deeds by making ourselves and all our neighbors miserable, employing for that purpose the same agencies, as nearly as we can reproduce them, that caused their sufferings? Of course it is.

This is why our gallant militiamen don their thickest coats, their tightest belts, and their heaviest hats, and march through all the hottest streets General Shaler can think of, patriotically doing their best to get sunstrokes like those that levelled their great-grandfathers at Monmouth and the Brandywine. This is why we blow off our arms and fingers, and provide our children with the means of setting fire to their clothes and singeing their innocent countenances. This is why we so cheerfully surrender our homes, to what enterprising reporters call the devouring element. This is why we half smother ourselves in crowded halls, and endeavor to gain a realizing sense of the

times that tried men's souls by listening to tedious old gentlemen droning the Declaration of Independence, and callow young gentlemen declaiming flatulent lectures on the natural history of the American eagle. The more we suffer, the more we appreciate what our ancestors underwent that they might hand down to us, the priceless boon of liberty.

There is the logic of our present method of celebrating the glorious Fourth. Lives there an American who would not gladly suffer in such a cause? Echo answers—well, she ought to answer “not one;” but she doesn't. She answers that there live a great many Americans who positively decline so to suffer if they can help themselves; that said Americans rush out of town at the very first explosion of a Chinese cracker; that the militiamen swear worse than ever did the army in Flanders as they trudge fainting through the burning streets on the “servant girl's parade;” that most Americans, in fact all save

those who import fire-crackers, consider the present mode of celebration as puerile and idiotic ; that as a matter of fact, the rejoicing on the great occasion is confined to gentlemen who owe their citizenship to courts of record, and whose ancestors, if they ever had any, did their revolutionary marching and fighting in Hessian and Irish regiments, under the flag of Great Britain. We are disgusted with Echo. She ought to be ashamed of herself. She has spoiled a splendid paragraph, prevented us from finishing this article in a properly patriotic manner, and set us to wondering whether it isn't just possible that Tommy Jacchus, when he pitched into us so the other night came, remarkably near saying a sensible thing.



ON FRENCH GILT.



WE saw Miss Sansargent last night. We will not say where. It was either in town, or out. If in town, we will not expose her to the scathing remarks of her friends by proclaiming the disgraceful fact ; if out, we will not be the means of increasing the Saturday night gains of a grasping landlord by announcing to her admirers the situation of the favored hostelry, whose broad piazza she brightens with her presence.

We could not help observing that Miss Sansargent was in that perturbed state of mind, euphuistically denominated by the cultured youth of the period, "a wax." She was distraught, and we perceived that she listened to our cheerful conversation only because she does not like us well enough to be rude to us.

If Cordifrage had been in our place, she would have snubbed him unmercifully. As even the very latest engagement did not serve to rouse her from her melancholy we allowed her to lead the talk. Her misanthropy was shocking. She thought society-people were all dreadfully heartless and shallow. She didn't care anything about dancing, and was not going out at all any more. She was tired of the useless life she had been leading, and should like to join a sisterhood—the dress was very becoming to her. Indulging in the luxury of woe she grew almost oppressively sombre. She didn't believe there was such a thing as real affection in the world—did we? She *dia* think once that her father and mother liked her (why do girls always say “liked” when they mean “loved”), but—oh, well, they were like everybody else, she supposed.

What could be the matter? Had Cordifrage been flirting with Minnie Mazette again, and so turned a moderately wholesome heart to gall

for the time being? We wondered, but judiciously said nothing. We were rewarded. The “hinc” of “illæ lachrymæ” finally appeared. Nellie had been to the jeweler’s to have the main-spring of her watch renewed for the seventeenth time since Christmas, and had become desperately enamored of a pair of solitaire ear-drops. They were perfectly lovely, and only eight hundred dollars—diamonds are so cheap now—and pa was just as mean as he could be—said he couldn’t afford it—such stuff!

“It makes me mad every time I think of it,” said Nellie. Then she considered awhile. “I’ve enough tortoise shell, and French gilt, and Roman pearls, and such things to set up a store—and they’re all out of date now, and no use at all. Dear me I wish I had all the money I spent for such trash last winter, I could buy the ear-rings myself. I don’t see why girls are such fools!”

We did not see either; but we saw an open-

ing for a few appropriate remarks, that Nellie we grieve to say, utterly refused to listen to. But you, Oh ! reader, are unable to talk back, and are at our mercy. So, for your benefit, we will point the moral of this "ower true tale," and follow out a little way a line of suggestions flowing from Miss Sansargent's last petulant exclamation.

"Why are girls such fools?" Observe the quotation marks, Mademoiselle, we beg of you. Why will they buy "tortoise-shell" combs, "oxydized-silver" chatelaines, flower jewelry, "aqua-marinas" and all the other trash the ingenuity of the "Bon Marché" and "Palais Royal" can furnish? Why will they, in the course of a winter, spend on knick-knacks, that are out of style in a month, as much money as would procure for them some one of those possessions so deservedly dear to the female heart, diamonds, laces, and the like, that cannot become unfashionable and never lose their value? Goodness knows.

The wardrobe and the jewel box of the young lady of this ilk are always full to overflowing, but their whole contents are not worth as much as her grandmother's one "best silk," her few pieces of "real point," and her one set of costly brilliants. Cheap pretentiousness, gaudy worthlessness are the rage just now, in dress and in more important matters. Our girls are well enough content with their bargains most of the time, but once in a while, as in Nellie's case, their eyes are opened by the flash of some unattainable jewel, and then there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Fair reader, take warning by Nellie Sansargent, and turn your eyes away from the cheap fascination of French gilt.



ON OUR HOTEL.

WE have gone into the country. By “we” is meant that select body, “our set”—Madame Millefleurs, Nelly Sansargent, Minnie Mazette, and the rest. We are stopping at a hotel.

This most fortunate hostelry has, of course, a local habitation and a name, neither of which we mean to specify, for anything less than the usual rates. We speak of it, always, as “our hotel.”

Our hotel is an immense wooden building of the packing-box order of architecture. It is ornamented on three sides by what we Americans, in our gloriously independent misuse of

foreign terms, call a piazza. The northern division of this piazza is utilized as a sort of nursery coach-house, where you can hurt yourself against all sorts of baby-carriages, at any hour of the day or evening. The northern end furnishes a convenient basking-place for those colored gentlemen who pass the summer with us, and beguile the time by playing at being hall-boys and porters. Their imitation of brushing coats, fetching ice-water to our rooms, and being respectful, are very imperfect, but the manner in which they take fees is really quite admirable.

It is somewhat hard to define the functions of the front piazza. If you saw it at eight in the morning, when the stage is about leaving, you would take it for the platform of a railway station; later in the morning it resembles an over-worked and badly conducted foundling asylum; during the most of the afternoon the Desert of Sahara is populous and cheerful compared to it; at seven when

the boat arrives, it is more like a baggage-room than anything else ; on most evenings, it has all the essential features of a Sorosis club-room ; but on Saturdays and Sundays, when Cordifrage and Tommy Jacchus and Van Bourse come up, it is a very jolly place.

Our hotel is always pleasantly filled. It is, at present, inhabited by five hundred babies and their mothers—we decline to take off a baby—four hundred and twenty-seven perambulators, with nurses in French caps attached, one hundred and fifty-seven charming young ladies, one nice young man. The young man enjoys himself immensely, and wonders how the young ladies can find it dull “when there are so many nice girls in the house.”

The rooms in our hotel are warm enough to render catching cold improbable, and of very fair size, if you don't mind keeping your trunk in the hall. The meals are beautifully served,

though some of the guests are of opinion that the effect would be more simple and rural if we had fewer white jacketed Africans and more fresh vegetables.

Our daily lives are placid and restful. After breakfast we look at our watches at intervals of two minutes to see if it isn't almost time for the mail. After it arrives, we read our letters, and then lend them to our friends, who do us the same favor. Thus we establish an epistolary circulating library, which is a great resource. This source of amusement exhausted, we have yawning matches till dinner. In the afternoon we retire to our rooms and fight flies until it is time to dress for tea. Tea over we go out and watch the new arrivals, enjoying their discomfiture at the hands of our princely clerk and haughty hall-boys. Sometimes we have "hops." Five of our waiters, disguised in dress suits, slaughter Strauss in the parlor; people from the village, and newly-arrived guests unused to the ways

of the house, try to dance on the heavy carpet ; "our set" look in at the windows and make fun of them.

We have a delightful life of it. You cannot imagine how we, with our dear cosy little rooms, our perfumed kerosene lamps, our mosquitoes, our June bugs, our week-old vegetables, our colored musicians, pity you poor wretches, condemned to big, airy city houses, Central Park, ever varied-tables, Thomas' orchestra, and Gilmore's Band. Come, pack your trunks and join us in this charming retreat. We will receive you with open arms. Do not delay a day. You will lose caste irrevocably if the end of July finds you still in town. Come at once ; and, above all, do not give yourselves time before you start to read that irrelevant fable concerning the fox, who, having by accident lost his tail, tried to induce all the other foxes to inconvenience themselves in like manner, on the plea that it was the fashion.



THE GILDED YOUTH.

PHILOSOPHY tells us that nothing was made in vain ; that the most noxious weed, the most insignificant insect, has its own special part to perform, without which the scheme of the universe would be incomplete. The busy bee, whose uninvited presence, puts pic-nic parties to flight, improves the shining hour by manufacturing the luscious honey ; the playful mosquito, who plants his sting with the most commendable impartiality in the furrowed brow of manhood and the delicate ankles of beauty in low shoes, teaches us patience under affliction, and shows us the inutile folly of profane language ; that most persistent of weeds, " pusley," furnishes

nourishing food for the almond-eyed Celestial ; but who can define the use or point the moral of that portentous production of modern civilization, the gilded youth of New York society ?

We have long been disagreeably aware of the existence of the gilded youth ; we have met him in supper rooms, where all fled dismayed from his energetic elbows, and champagne disappeared before him like snow-wreaths in the sun. We have seen him confusing Germans, and driving leaders to distraction ; we have watched him under many circumstances, but never before have we enjoyed such favorable opportunities for studying and reflecting upon his delightful characteristics as have been afforded us at our hotel this summer.

In New York during the season, the gilded youth is to a certain extent, lost in the throng. In the summer, when most men have something to do beside lounging about hotel piazzas, and the gilded youth constitutes the ma-

for part of the masculine element in watering-place society, his shining qualities stand out unobscured, and we can not escape their contemplation, even if we would.

The gilded youth is about nineteen years old. He has not even the semblance of an occupation. Being the only son of wealthy parents, he enjoys an ample allowance. He dresses in the most extravagant fashion, and indulges in unlimited neckties, ponderous watch-chains, low shoes, silk stockings, linked sleeve-buttons, and colored ribbons on his hat. His language is a mixture of the lowest sort of American slang, and such Anglicisms as he can cull from the pages of third-rate English novels. His manners are a combination of the awkwardness of the hobbledehoy, and the impudence of the Prince of the powers of the air. His accomplishments are a thorough mastery of the intricacies of draw-poker and an unapproachable skill in handling a billiard cue. He knows nothing, reverences noth-

ing, and cares for nothing but himself. He enjoys the personal acquaintance of all the bar-tenders in town, and is a connoisseur of mixed drinks. He is utterly impervious to slights, and has not sense enough to know when he is snubbed. He is noisy, conceited, and intrusive. To sum up his characteristics in a single word, borrowed from his own vocabulary, he is unendurably "fresh."

Concerning his real underlying nature, we say nothing. We believe there is nothing intrinsically bad about him. He is only a boy, who by the accident of wealth, and a total lack of proper training, has been led to think himself a man, and who does his best, according to his light, to act like one. It is not his fault that he is a gilded youth. It is the fault of a business-engrossed father and a foolish mother. He is not a criminal. He is simply a nuisance.

Is there no remedy for the gilded youth?
Are there no asylums, when at an early age he

can be secluded from the ordinary ungilded mass of humanity, until his gilding is worn off, and he becomes as other men are? Indeed there are—many of them. Not far from the classic town of Boston, on the banks of the silvery Charles, is a splendid institution of the kind. At New Haven, shaded by groves of leafy elms, stands another not unknown to fame. In our own city is an institution famous for transmuting gilded youths into thorough-bred gentlemen. Harvard, Yale, and Columbia—these are the proper receptacles for the gilded youth. Within their classic halls, in the rough and hearty contact with his fellows that college life enforces, his gilding will quickly disappear; stern professors and sarcastic tutors, will soon prick the inflated balloon of his conceit; in the interests of his class, his secret society, his crew, he will soon forget to consider his own personal claims to exclusive consideration; mathematics will train his mind, the classics will polish it; the

rules of base ball will drive the intricacies of draw-poker from his thoughts, and the oar will make his hand too callous for the proper guidance of the billiard cue. At the end of his four years he will come out a healthy, hearty, self-respecting young fellow, whom we of the elder generation, the Alumni of his Alma Mater, will be heartily proud, and if the truth were told not a little jealous of. Oh, business engrossed fathers, and foolish mothers, deliver us we pray you, from this sore affliction ; and send your sons to college and rid New York society of the gilded youth.



ON WHITE REINS.

N arriving from the city yesterday afternoon we found the moral atmosphere of our hotel greatly disturbed, two of the leaders of our little society have had a serious misunderstanding. Cordifrage and Nellie Sansargent have not spoken to each other for two days. Cordifrage is gloomy, spends most of his time in the bar, and smokes incessantly. His temper is dreadful, and we all leave him severely alone.

Nellie, on the contrary, is radiant. She is full of life and gayety, and seems unable to keep still for five minutes together. She treats all the gentlemen of the house with the most charming affability, and has struck up

quite a flirtation with that sweet youth, Tommy Jacchus. Minnie Mazette says she cried dreadfully after they went up to their room night before last. It is evident that a lover's quarrel of a serious nature is going on in our midst.

This morning Nellie seized us at the entrance to the breakfast-room, where she had evidently been lying in wait for us. "Herr Katzenjammer, I should like to speak to you for a minute." With a patient sigh we gave her our arm and our attention. "Now, I'm going to ask you a serious question," said Nellie, with awful gravity, "a question, whose answer may influence my whole future life. Do you think it's wicked for me to use white reins in my pony-carriage?" She paused for a reply, We gave it at once. "Why, of course not. what nonsense!" "I knew you'd say so," quoth Nellie, triumphantly, and floated away without further parley.

In a few minutes Cordifrage came round the

corner of the house with thunder on his brow.
“ See here, Kattenjammer, I wish you wouldn’t be everlastingly interfering in my affairs ! ”

“ Why, what have I done now ! ”

“ Didn’t you tell Nellie that she was perfectly right about that phaeton business ? That there wasn’t any harm in it at all ? Just encouraging her in her folly, when you know the girl’s making herself the talk of the whole place.”

“ My dear fellow,” we interrupted, “ what on earth are you talking about ”

Then Cordifrage became outrageous, and brought Nellie “ to confront us,” as he said, and between them they managed to prove that we had upheld and supported Nellie in every point of her quarrel with Cordifrage, a quarrel with which white reins to a pony-phaeton seemed to have some mysterious connection ; that we had advised her not to submit to such tyranny ; that we had declared that were we in her place, we would sooner break off her

engagement than be treated so cruelly, and that we had made other intemperate remarks too numerous to have been thought of even in the infinitesimal space of time occupied by our above-detailed conversation with the young lady in question. At last, after loading us with reproaches for our "underhanded attempt to sow the seeds of a quarrel between them," they left us in perfect amity with each other, and the sun once more shone brightly in the moral firmament of our hotel.

We felt somewhat surprised at the treatment we had received, and lent our mighty energies to the task of discovering the reason thereof. It appears that some two weeks ago Miss Nellie took unto herself a pony-phæton of the most emphatic description. Basket body, lined with white linen embroidered with her monogram ; blue silk strap to keep her dress off the wheels ; seat behind for a servant ; pair of black ponies as far away from the body of the vehicle as possible ; parasol whip ; gold

mounted harness, and white list reins. In this gorgeous equipage Miss Sansargent disported herself to her great satisfaction. Naturally her appearance elicited numerous knowing remarks of a not altogether agreeable nature from the numerous young gentlemen congregated at our watering-place, who, while actually but little acquainted with the ways of this wicked world, always affect a very unnecessary amount of occult learning in regard thereto. Cordifrage happened to overhear one or two of these comments, and after withering the unfortunate commentators, came home in a towering rage to mildly remonstrate with Nellie. Natural result—a violent quarrel.

Nellie, being a woman, hated Cordifrage and everybody else for fifteen minutes; then she owned to herself that he was right; then she cried, and wished she had never seen her phaeton; then vowed she wouldn't be the first to "make up," and that he shouldn't see

that she cared ; then tried to make him jealous ; and, finally, in desperation hit on the plan, which she successfully carried out, of dragging us into the quarrel. What did she care for us, or any man, so long as she could be reconciled with her lover ! So we were deluded into expressing an opinion on the seemingly harmless subject of "white reins." Minnie Mazette was deputed to inform Cordifrage that we had told Nellie that there was no harm whatever in what she had done. Cordifrage was enraged. Nellie being appealed to, supported him in whatever he chose to assert, and they clasped hands over their victim.

Neither of them has spoken to us since, and we have had plenty of time to deduce the moral from this simple story of watering-place life. It is this : if you are intimately acquainted with a friend's *fiancée*, if they quarrel, and the *fiancée* asks your judgment pending the quarrel, on no matter what subject, don't give it. If she inquires as to what you think

of the Gadsden Treaty, feign insanity. If she asks if you don't believe the moon is made of green cheese, say that the evidence is insufficient to warrant any conclusion. Say anything, do anything rather than express an opinion. For, be you sure, that artful young woman is but seeking a scapegoat whereon to lay the burden of her transgression, manufacturing a serpent of whom she can say, "He did beguile me."



ON ADJECTIVES OF ALL WORK.

WE have once more returned to our hotel. Last night we had a hop, so the parlor was given up to the ladies and gentlemen of the village, while the regular denizens of the house took refuge from blundering June-bugs and gallopading rustics on the broad, cool, half-lit piazza.

It is a pleasant place o' nights, that piazza of ours. About the parlor windows are gathered gay groups, watching and criticising the devotees of Terpsichore within. On the southern side, where, in pursuance of the instructions of our considerate and economical host, the hall-boys never light any gas, sit confidential couples who fear not the oppro-

bious name of "spoons;" in convenient, though unassuming corners, lurk solitary, smoking-dervishes; of whom we are one. Past us—brushing our chairs with their gauzy garments—float the belles of the house, deep in important converse with devoted masculine escorts, or favored feminine friends.

Katzenjammer is absorbing, and absorbed in the fumes of his cigar; Cordifrage is still in town, so Minnie Mazette and Nellie Sargent being off duty for the evening have joined forces, and with arms intertwined, are enjoying a perambulatory *tete-à-tete* whereon no male mortal has the presumption to intrude. As they pass and repass our station we hear disjointed fragments of their talk.

"Haven't you really? I thought every one had been to Niagara. You ought to go. The falls are so nice."

Their voices die away in the distance. Now they are coming back again.

"How do you like Mr. Jacchus, Nellie? I

know people laugh at him, but I think he's sorter nice, don't you?" "Sorter" is, we would explain, an untranslatable young-ladyism. Again they pass us.

"Wasn't the weather awful last week?" And so they go on. We lazily amuse ourselves by wondering if they will use any qualifying term whatever beside "nice" and "awful." A long experience of the language of young-ladydom leads us to believe that they will not. We are confirmed in that belief. Every time they pass we hear one of those two adjectives, but we listen in vain for any other. One might well believe that "nice" and "awful" exhausted the descriptive resources of the English language. Every human being, every natural object, every moral quality is either "nice" or "awful" according as it is pleasing or displeasing to these two presumably well-educated young women. It is evident that young-ladydom

has a vocabulary of its own, in which there are to be found but two adjectives—"nice" defined by every laudatory, "awful" including the meaning of every condemnatory term in Webster's dictionary.

Procrustes was nothing to Minnie Mazette and Nellie Sansargent. Cruel and unrelenting though he was, he would never have thus racked and distorted two unoffending adjectives, forcing them to cover all sorts, shapes and sizes of unsuitable meanings. As we evolve this classical and ingenious comparison, the girls leave the piazza.

We light a fresh cigar, and fall into a train of philological musing. We declare to our self that "nice" and "awful" are becoming monotonous. We do not care to have young ladies talk like books; we would not be at all pleased to have the girl of the period transmuted into a walking Roget's Thesaurus; but we would like her to make an

effort to throw off this lingual laziness, that leads her to designate Niagara, the Sistine Madonna, her new Worth costume, and Tommy Jacchus, all by the one word "nice"; to classify under the single term of "awful", death, the judgment, Ouida's novels, and her rival's best bonnet. What variety and richness six new adjectives would add to the language of feminine good society. For instance, "swell," a word of infinite possibilities, "lovely," "elegant," "horrid," "disgusting," "abominable." Will not some fearless young woman take the responsibility of introducing them?

We cannot blame the girls very much after all. When grave philologists are advocating with ponderous pens the adoption of phonetic orthography, we must not expect giddy girls to shun phonetic verbiage. Oh, grave philologists and giddy girls, our language is a work of art; it is as beautiful as it

is useful ; don't deface it with your lazy labor-saving, Cheap John contrivances. Torturing the Queen's English is a worse crime than murdering it outright.



ON "LES CANARDS TYROLIENS."

TO those of our grave and dignified readers, whom report or Parisian experience may enable to comprehend the significance of the indifferent French of the above title, and who, therefore, may be inclined to suspect that a somewhat light and flippant tone, unsuited to their habits of mind may characterize this article, we would say, by way of preface, that, as the monkish preachers of mediæval days chose often to enhance the solemnity of their discourses by basing them upon mean, ludicrous and incongruous themes, and as more modern clergymen, when indolence has tempted them into regaling their unsuspecting congregations with some musty

relic of their youthful pens, will sometimes, disregarding the injunction concerning old wine and new bottles, seek to disguise the veteran homily by capping it with a new text, with which its time-worn body but illy harmonizes, so do we purpose to contrast the gravity of our essay with the flippancy of its title, and attract attention to the words of Wisdom by a preliminary jingling of the bauble of Folly.

Lest perchance, on the other hand, there be those among our audience, who have never heard before of "Les Canards Tyroliens," and to whom therefore the above breathless sentence is but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal, we will interject a word or two of explanation.

"Les Canards Tyroliens" is a song familiar to every gamin in Paris. It was sung in a spectacle called "La Chatte Blanche," enacted at the "Theatre des Gaietes," by that finished artist and estimable lady, Mlle. Therèse,

whilom street singer, and idol of the "cafés chantants," becomingly attired in somewhat scanty costume, imitative to a certain extent of the appearance of that most respectable fowl, the duck.

Its chief elements of success are a dashing air, a curious chorus, half "quack" and half yodel, and a presumable *soupcçon* of Gallic impropriety, which we take for granted, since our knowledge of Parisian slang is not of so intimate a nature as to enable us thoroughly to appreciate the delicate and incisive wit of this delightful lyric.

We trust that, without entering more fully into the antecedents and character of "*Les Canards Tyroliens*," we have said enough to cause most of our readers to sympathize with the somewhat disgusted surprise we experienced, when last Saturday evening we heard the ballad in question sung, with great spirit, in the parlor of our hotel, before an audience neither very small, nor especially

select, by that model young lady, Minnie Mazette.

The high-keyed, rollicking air just suited her clear soprano, and she sang it splendidly, doing the quack and yodel with great spirit and telling effect. Everybody laughed, and insisted upon an *encore*, especially enthusiastic being the elderly folk, who were charmed with Minnie's bright, young face, and blessed with utter ignorance of the French language.

We neither laughed nor applauded, but retired to a far corner of the piazza to smoke a ruminative cigar.

At the risk of being called by the pretty name that Mr. Charles Reade has bestowed on those critics who have ventured to express doubts as to the delicacy of various passages in his famous fictions, we must confess that notwithstanding pretty constant attendance upon the course of moral induration furnished to the youth of New York by the managers of

fashionable theatres, this ornithological ditty, coming as it did from the pure lips of an innocent girl, produced a very unpleasant effect upon us. It took the flavor out of our cigar. It made us doubt, in the first strength of the shock, Miss Mazette's right to her place in that temple of sanctity where gentlemen place gentlewomen, and if Minnie Mazette, true-hearted, worshipful little lady as she has ever appeared, spite of her nonsense, hasn't a right there, it will be hard to find a New York girl that has. So we reflect gruesomely.

But ere long fair play puts in a word. "Come, come, it isn't so bad as that!" No, it isn't. We mustn't be too hard upon Minnie. She sang that song which, after all, hasn't anything very bad about it except its associations, just as girls do a good many things, over which their brothers and lovers hold up their hands in holy horror, simply because they're too good to see any harm in them—because they haven't had those advantages of education which have

made these young gentlemen such competent critics. We are compelled to own, that if we had not gone to see "La Chatte Blanche" the night we arrived in Paris, and, like Minnie Mazette, had never heard Thérèse sing "Les Canards," and knew nothing more of the fair songstress than her name, we should have seen no more harm in Minnie's performance than she does herself.

Now the question comes—suppose we had not seen any harm in the song, does that make it any more suitable for Minnie's *repertoire*? We fear not. "*Honi soit qui mal y pense*" is, as it ought to be, considering its origin, an elastic motto, but it won't do to stretch it too far. Minnie Mazette knew well enough that there was something about that song to distinguish it from "Old Hundred." She knew she was in mischief when she was singing it, and enjoyed the knowledge. She felt it was just a little bit "fast," which word we must explain, when used by a young lady, is a very

mild form of expression indeed. Things really wrong in themselves girls have no euphuisms for ; they call them by their right names. Things wrong only because they are forbidden by Mrs. Grundy are "fast." So there are two kinds of "fastness," the innocent and the other.

Now, young ladies, as a general thing, have not the knowledge that would enable them to draw the line between the two varieties, with entire accuracy, and it would be a very unfortunate state of affairs if they had. So to keep themselves clear of that most terrible of social misfortunes "being talked about," there is but one safe rule. Never indulge in anything that offers the attraction of "fastness," *in company*. Oh, daughters of Gotham, as you value your good names, adopt this old foggyish, and time-serving maxim, "Avoid even the appearance of evil," and lay to heart this lesson, that of all the uncharitable, vain, and

coarse-minded beings on the face of the earth,
the New York society-man is least manly in
his estimate of women.



MOLLIE CENTLIVRES' MISTAKE.

MOLLY Centlivres is in disgrace. She has been running a tilt with Mrs. Grundy and has had very much the worst of the encounter. Poor child, with what generous ardor she rode into the lists, the champion of a friend, breathing defiance to that puissant and matronly amazon before whose frown good society trembles! With what high courage she laid her lance in rest, and charged upon her adversary! Alas, at the first shock her weapon was shivered and she flung prostrate in the lists, her silver armor dented, her snowy crest soiled. It will be many a day ere her shield regains its lustre, and her

plume shows once more white and spotless in the eyes of good society.

To drop metaphor, Miss Centlivres has innocently got herself into a very serious scrape. This is the manner of it.

Mrs. Rougelionne made a descent on our hotel about a week ago. We don't propose to detail this lady's late history. It is a rather unsavory subject, and most people in society know it already. Mrs. Rougelionne two years ago was unanimously sent to Coventry. She found the locality somewhat lonesome, and determined to retake society by storm. Hence her arrival at our hotel with two carriages, half a dozen horses, no end of servants, and Paris dresses innumerable. She made a gallant fight for recognition, and was ignominiously defeated. Mrs. Bonhomme absolutely ran away from "the dreadful woman" when she tried to speak to her. She bowed to Nellie Sansargent, whereat Cordifrage looked fierce and Nellie calmly unconscious. She

was seated at Mrs. Millefleurs' table at dinner, and petted the little Millefleurs next to her. Mrs. Millefleurs moved herself and her flock elsewhere at tea time. Mrs. Rougelionne had, we fear, a very hard time of it, indeed.

Now, when Mollie Centlivres was a dreadfully home-sick little girl in the lowest class of a great boarding school, Mrs. Rougelionne, then Fannie Volauveut held the proud position of head-girl in the same institution of learning. She took a liking to poor little Mollie, petted her, helped her in her lessons, and was altogether so kind that the lonesome and affectionate child conceived an attachment for her that lasted, although the two girls had not seen each other since Fannie's graduation, even up to the time when, as Mrs. Rougelionne, that lady made her appearance at our hotel.

Mollie is generous, impulsive and Quixotic. Moreover, although she knew that her old friend had got herself into some sort of

trouble, she had never heard the whole scandal, and had not the faintest conception of the depth of Fannie's disgrace. Of course she thought that the way in which our hotel treated her was "a shame," and determined to stand by her; so at supper, when Mrs. Millefleurs put her crowning slight on the black sheep, our ardent young lady rose from her seat, floated over to Mrs. Rougelionne, greeted her demonstratively, and, tea over, walked the piazza with her till bed-time. Three people in the house, Nellie Sansargent, Cordifrage and Katzenjammer, understood Mollie's motive, and felt sorry for her. Every one else misconstrued her conduct, and immediately came to the conclusion that she was no better than her companion. Unfortunately, Mrs. Centlivres had gone to the city and Mollie was under no one's control. Of her three friends, Cordifrage and Katzenjammer would sooner have cut their tongues out than have used them to speak to her on such a subject; and

Nellie, after much hesitation, said she would see what she could do. Unfortunately, before Nellie had a chance to remonstrate with her Mollie reaped the first fruits of her folly in the shape of a cut direct from Madame Millefleurs. This provoked her, for she felt she didn't deserve it, and so Nellie's well-meant interference only earned her a severe snubbing. There was nothing for us to do but to let Mollie alone and wait for her mother's return.

Miss Centlivres was with her injured innocent all the next day, and in the afternoon went out driving with her in her grand landau. She didn't come back to tea. Nine o'clock struck and she had not returned. Nellie, Cordifrage and Katzenjammer sat in the porch waiting for her. Madame Millefleurs came up. "Has not Miss Centlivres returned yet?" "I am sorry to say she has not." Madame Millefleurs made no remark, but sent a boy for a wrap and seated herself on the other side of the porch. It was nearly eleven before we

heard the sound of rapid hoofs, and Mrs. Rougelionne's landau dashed up.

There sat Mollie, looking pale and frightened, and at her side, *horribile dictu*, the hero of the Rougelionne scandal, Cecil Vaurien himself; opposite them on the front seat were "dear Fannie" and one of the most notorious scamps in society. Charming company for a well brought up young lady, truly! Both men were smoking, neither was quite sober. With unsteady feet Vaurien alighted and turned to help Mollie out. She put his hand aside and stepped from the carriage. The drunken-rascal caught her in his arms and kissed her.

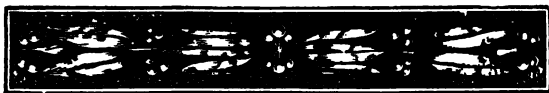
With a remark that sounded like an oath, Cordifrage jumped over the railing, knocked Vaurien down, and turned to offer his arm to Mollie; but Madame Millefleurs and Nellie were before him and had already taken the frightened girl under their protection. Nellie led Mollie to her room, while Madame Millefleurs swept into the office to inform our host

that either she or Mrs. Rougelionne must leave the house next day. Mrs. Rougelionne heard in the morning that her rooms were required, and left in the noon train. Mollie kept her room all day. The gossips of our hotel battened on the story. The facts were simply these : Mrs. Rougelionne had picked up Vaurien and his friend in the village ; they had insisted on having a champagne supper at the lake ; the men took too much wine and were horribly rude ; and Mollie had not pluck enough to leave them and come home alone. But when did a scandal-monger limit herself to facts ? The story grew as it spread, and when Mrs. Centlivres came up from town that night she had the pleasure of finding that her daughter was the most famous young lady in the place. She took her away with her next morning, and so in ignominy and defeat, ended Mollie Centlivres' defiance of Mrs. Grundy.

Of course Mollie will come out all right in the end. Her three friends stand by her

faithfully, and Madame Millefleurs has joined forces with us. But even we cannot deny that our *protégée* made a dreadful mistake.

Young ladies, take warning from poor Mollie. Don't fly into the face of Mrs. Grundy, and remember this—that when our not over-strict New York society is compelled to cut one of its members, the person incurring that penalty may safely be set down as a very black sheep indeed.



ON A STAY-AT-HOME.

HUMANKIND fate has compelled us to exchange the breezy piazzas of our hotel for the broiling pavements of Wall Street ; stern necessity has forced us into the sweltering ranks of the noble army of stay-at-homes. Enjoying the sweet do-nothingness of watering-place life, we waxed fat, and kicked, and presumed to be sarcastic concerning the joys of our hotel. Our ingratitude has been fitly punished. In our wearisome office, our lonely room, our deserted Club, we have full leisure to repent thereof, and musing upon morning walks, afternoon rides, and evening dances, to fully realize what we have lost.

We have but one consolation. A well-

meaning friend has actually procured some business for Cordifrage, and that learned jurist, suddenly called, to town is as badly off as ourselves. As badly do we say—his strait is far worse than ours. We have been, after all, only “spectator ab extra” in our hotel, taking little interest in its fair denizens save as subjects for philosophical contemplation, while Cordifrage, as the readers of these veracious chronicles well knows, is sorely smitten by the charms of the fair and gentle Nellie Sansargent. To the miseries of heat, dulness and summer theatricals are added, in his case, causeless jealousy, unreasonable doubts, and leaden loneliness. In watching and analyzing his griefs we have half forgotten our own.

While he was at our hotel Cordifrage monopolized Nellie Sansargent, and only parted from her at bed time to meet her again at breakfast. In this constant companionship, and the mutual intimacy to which it naturally

gave rise, he felt far more assured that she was entirely his own property than the present state of his income at all warrants. Nellie and he had a most sentimental parting, and the first letter that she wrote him after he left was satisfactorily loving and devoted. She missed him wofully and thought about him constantly for a day or two. She soon found however, that this state of mind was neither pleasant nor profitable. She sensibly concluded that since circumstances prevented her from seeing him, the course for her to adopt was to make the best of their separation, and to pass the time of her lover's absence as quickly and agreeably as possible. Thinking about him did no good; wherefore she determined not to think about him. So she laughed, talked and flirted, and truthfully told him all about her doings in her letters. Perhaps Cordifrage would adopt the same course if he were so lucky as to have any one to laugh and talk and flirt with, but

the city is deserted, and he hasn't. So, the poor fellow thinks about Nellie all day, and dreams about her the most of the night. Jealousy drives him wild. He broods miserably over his unhappy state, and has become a nuisance to himself and a bore to his friends. He drinks too much, smokes too much, does nothing, and devours his brain. We are sorry for Cordifrage, but can give him no help. We can only listen to his groans, and secretly wish he would go home and let us go to bed.

Some years ago when we were younger and less wise, we would have advised him. We would have told him that he was making a fool of himself. That he should have enough confidence in Nellie's affection to know that a few weeks absence could not make her forget him. That she was adopting the wisest course, and that he would do well to follow her example. That instead of wasting time in whining and groaning, he ought to be

using every minute in striving to get on in his profession so that he could marry Nellie next winter, and put an end to these separations which, jesting aside, are wearing out his love and hers. We would say to him read law instead of novels, write briefs instead of love letters, stop your moaning and go to work. We do not give this advice. We know better. We think a great deal of Cordifrage's present and future happiness, but we think even more of his pleasant little dinners: his specially-imported Burgundy and his well-selected cigars. We don't want to quarrel with him. Besides, our interposition would be utterly useless. Events must take their course. Cordifrage will spend the remainder of the summer in fretting about Nellie, in misconstruing her every act and word; in writing desperate letters; and to put it mildly, in drowning his sorrows in the flowing bowl. When Nellie returns, he will be more devoted than ever; he will spend

most of his time, and all his money, dangling after her.

Neither this summer nor next winter will he do one single square day's work, nor give up one single indulgence, and next spring will find him no nearer marrying Nellie than he is now. They will be separated again. Nellie naturally will find this unresultant love-making "flat, stale and unprofitable," and marry some one else before her youthful beauty and her matrimonial chances together desert her. Then Cordifrage will come to our room and groan and rave, and we will wish he would go home and let us go to bed even as we do now. And so will end the romance of Cordifrage and Nellie Sansargent. *Amantes sunt amantes*—always were, always will be.



ON BOUILLON.

SINCE our cousin Dupays returned to the rural seclusion of his mountain home, he has been shedding glory on the family name ; he has been plucking literary laurels ; he has become an author, and throughout this broad land, wherever the "Pondunk Pioneer" is read, the name of Dupays is known and honored.

Dupays spent a month with us in the early part of last season. There was but little going on, but we did our best to amuse him. We walked him on the avenue, procured him the entree of our club, introduced him to several ladies, and had him invited to, we believe three parties.

Dupays is a man of keen observation ; so, in these four weeks he acquired an accurate and minute knowledge of New York fashionable society in all its varied phases. He saw all its hollowness, all its folly ; nothing escaped his wide-open blue eyes. Returning to his native heath, he could not bear quietly to devote himself to agricultural pursuits and withhold his newly acquired knowledge from a benighted world. He exchanged his spade for a pen, his seed-bag for an inkstand, and sat him down to write those articles on "The Modern Gomorrah," which, by their masterly English, their strict impartiality, and their keen and polished satire have produced so marked a sensation among the sixty odd subscribers of the favored journal to which they were contributed.

Dupays has been kind enough to send us the papers containing these productions. We have read them, and they have opened our eyes. We never realized before what senseless, soulless, and generally reprehensible peo-

ple our friends are. Dupays should have warned us. We would never have prevented him from wearing a yellow nankeen vest, and a green scarf barred with red to Mollie Centlivre's German, if we knew that from our friendly interference he would deduce this conclusion: "The people of the modern Gomorrah all prostrate their bodies before the Juggernaut car of fashion with a fanaticism as pitiable as it is ridiculous; no friendship is too sacred, no tie of consanguinity too closely knit" (we presume he refers to the green and red one) "to be offered on the shrine of this simpering idol in a low-cut black vest, and a white neck-cloth." Minnie Mazette would never have refused to forsake her partner, give up the German, and sit listening to Dupays' talk about his father's rheumatism all the evening, if she had for an instant suspected what a rod he had in pickle for her—"with the young ladies (?) who bloom (?) in this hot bed of artificiality, manly worth and solid merit count for

nothing in comparison with the ability to caper nimbly to the soft breathings of the lascivious flute." (Shakespeare we presume.) "Heels overbalance heads in every direction." These are fair specimens of Dupays' style. We read his articles to a select circle of people whom we judged might receive benefit from them, and the effect produced was remarkable. "Some of the young ladies (?) who bloom (?), etc.," actually became hysterical, so intense was their emotion.

To illustrate various startling propositions, Dupays tells us a number of stories of fashionable life that do great credit to his imaginative powers. One occurrence that would go far to show the utter depravity of appetite prevailing in our best circles, he has omitted to mention, perhaps from a failure of memory natural under the circumstances, or perhaps since he himself was the hero of the tale, from that natural modesty which is so marked a trait of his amiable character.

It was at a reception at Madame Millefleurs. Dupays had heard much of a certain beverage known to him as "bullion ;" he was most anxious to taste it. He requested us to show him where it was to be found and we did so. Dupays procured some of the coveted beverage, which was served, as usual, in small coffee cups. Although reared in the rural districts, Dupays' early education had not been entirely neglected, and among other things, he had learned that all warm liquids served in cups must be plentifully sweetened, and taken into the system by means of a spoon. Spoons and sugar were at hand, so Dupays treated, his *bouillon* therewith, according to his lights and proceeded to enjoy it. It did not please him ; he pronounced it "nasty," and expressed uncomplimentary opinions in regard to people who would pretend to like such stuff just because it was fashionable. We don't wonder. We are only surprised that he has not related this story in his stirring articles,

and made the application of it that we have indicated.

But there is another application to be made of this story. It is, in a certain sense, an allegory of Dupays and New York society. Dupays did not appreciate New York girls; he did not appreciate New York men; he did not appreciate New York "bouillon," all for the same reason—that he did not know how to take them.

Ah, Dupays, believe us, we are not prostrating ourselves before the "simpering idol." We are not depreciating "manly worth and solid merit" when in friendly spirit we advise you to turn your attention once more to those agricultural occupations, concerning which we know as little as you do of New York society, and to cease your bucolic bellowings at our faults and foibles.

If you had lived in New York for fifteen or twenty years, if you had been a part of its society, if you had marched shoulder to shoul-

der with these young gentlemen whose "heels overbalance their heads" in the first regiment that left our State for the front in '61, if you had taken a wife from the "daughters of Heth," "who bloom in this hot bed of artificiality," you would have known that human nature in Worth dresses and swallow-tail coats is pretty much the same thing as human nature in calico frocks and home-spun overalls; that to reason that men have never done anything because they don't talk about their deeds, is what logicians call a gross *non sequitur*, and that it is not fair to conclude that young women have no hearts because they don't wear them on their sleeves for public inspection.

When you learn these things you will be better qualified to write fairly and understandingly about the manners and customs of fashionable society in the first city of America.

THE END.







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